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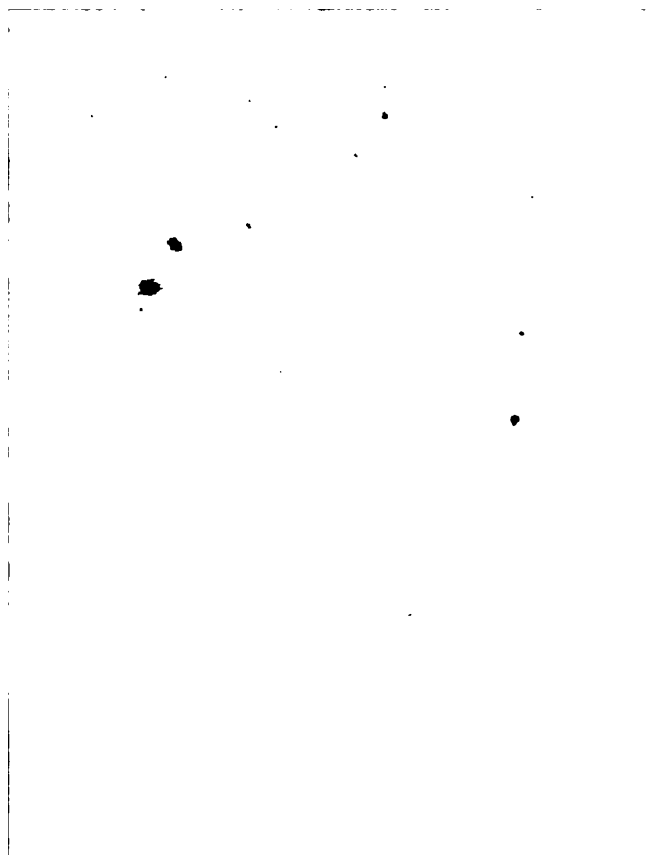




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A

TREATISE ON THE CHURCH,

CHIEFLY WITH RESPECT TO ITS

GOVERNMENT:

IN WHICH

THE DIVINE RIGHT OF EPISCOPACY

IS MAINTAINED,

THE SUPREMACY OF THE BISHOP OF ROME

PROVED TO BE

CONTRARY TO THE SCRIPTURES AND PRIMITIVE FATHERS;

AND THE

REFORMED EPISCOPAL CHURCH

IN

ENGLAND, IRELAND, AND SCOTLAND,

PROVED TO BE A SOUND AND ORTHODOX PART OF THE

CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Compiled from the most Eminent Divines.

By EDWARD BARWICK, M. A.

OF TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.

Second Edition,

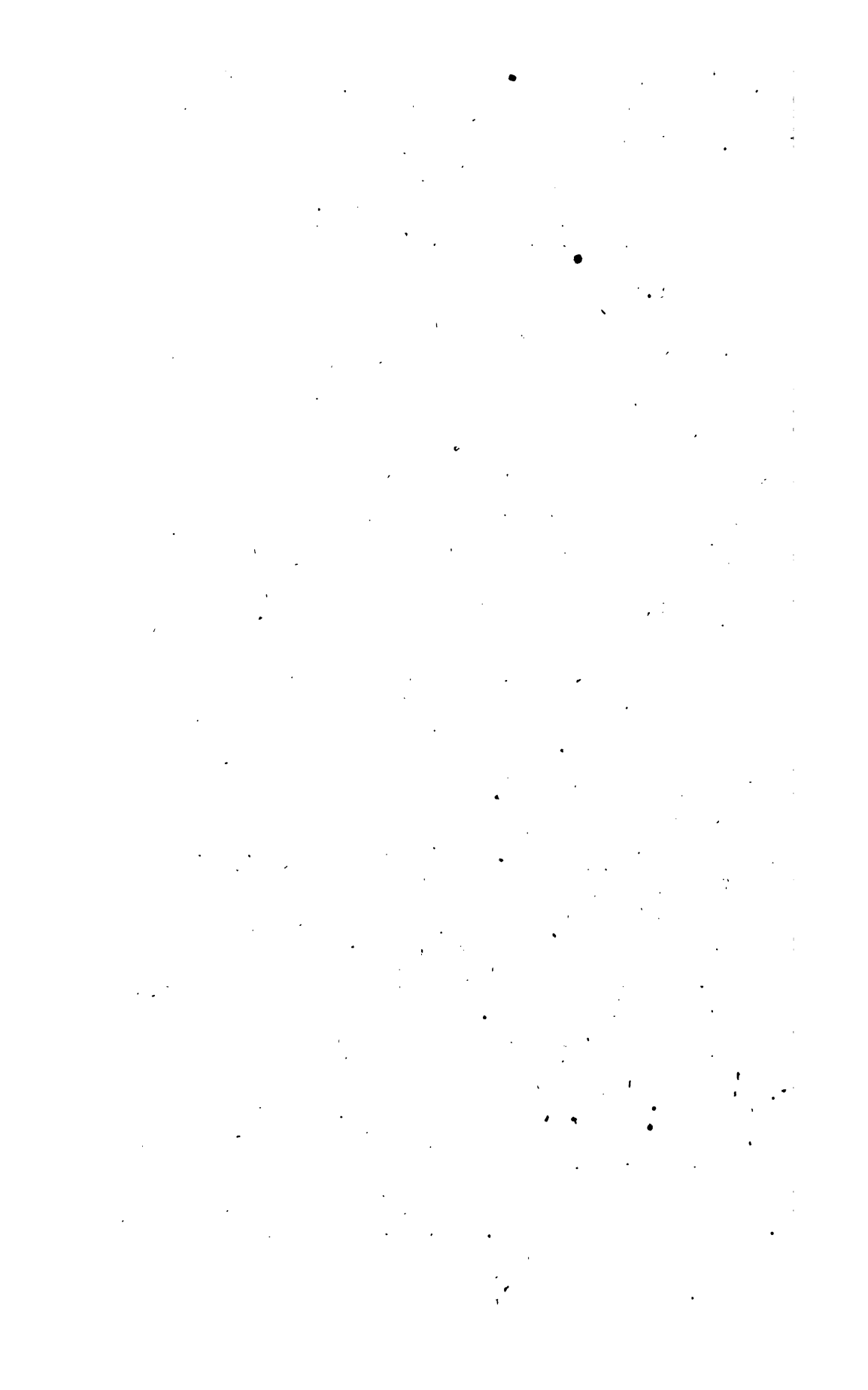
CONSIDERABLY ENLARGED AND IMPROVED.

BELFAST:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY GEORGE BERWICK, 1. NORTH STREET,
F. C. AND J. RIVINGTON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD, J. HATCHARD,
PICCADILLY, LONDON; A. CONSTABLE AND COMPANY, EDIN-
BURGH; AND W. WATSON, AND C. P. ARCHER,
DUBLIN.

1813.

110. c. 131.



PREFACE

to THE

FIRST EDITION.

I AM persuaded that the following Treatise, which attempts to explain the nature of the government which Christ has established in his Church, will require no apology, since all who profess themselves christians are so closely interested in the subject.

That gross ignorance on this subject prevails at present among all, even among the members of the Church (for whom this treatise is principally intended,) is too evident to require any proof. And how unnatural is it, that the members of any society should be ignorant of its origin and establishment, the principles on which it was instituted, and the rules by which its credit and dignity have been supported. This ignorance (as a lay-member of the Church of England observes *,) which, on other occasions, is only extremely absurd,—when applied to the principles of our ecclesiastical constitution, is highly reprehensible in itself, and attended with the most dangerous consequences.

* *Treatise on the Church, by William Stevens, Esq. 1799.*

Many will be surprised, and look upon it as a novelty to be told (what yet is the old and true doctrine,) that to that *sound* and *catholic* part of Christ's Church, which is established in the country where he was born, or where the providence of God has fixed him, he is bound to adhere,—that to all its ordinances in indifferent matters, all those rules which it has directed to be observed for the purpose of edification, it is his duty to conform,—that he who separates from such a particular church, does it at his peril,—that he is committing an act for which he must be seriously and deeply accountable at the day of judgment,—that, in short, Schism, independently of all considerations of doctrine, though it should be no part of its object to work any express corruption of the truth, is *in itself* a grievous and heinous sin, hurtful in the greatest degree to the general interests of christianity, and big with the most serious consequences to the individual.

Custom indeed, the loose writing of some of the clergy, and the general silence of the body upon the constitution of the christian church, have so far reconciled us to the divisions that have taken place among christians, that they are no longer seen in the light in which they were seen in the primitive days of the church; whilst charity, forbidding us to speak harshly of the spiritual condition of our brethren, has in a manner tended to efface the sin of schism from our minds. In the liturgy of the church we pray against *schism*; if, by their *writings* or *conduct*, the clergy at the same

time give encouragement to it,—will they not, by so doing, be thought to be acting in contradiction to the profession which they have made? But this, it is to be feared, is the case with all those who, instead of *pointing out* to the laity the danger attendant upon their officiously meddling with the ministerial office, and the duty of submitting to those teachers, who by authority are set over them, by their loose writing or irregular practice lead them to the very opposite conclusion. And what reasonable hope can be entertained, that the unity of the church will, in any degree, be preserved, whilst those whose office it is to preserve it, become the instruments of its dissolution?

When, therefore, such loose opinions as these prevail, entirely destructive of the unity of the christian church,—when every one must perceive the increasing defection from the communion and authority of this church; silence on the part of its friends, whether clergy or laity, becomes criminal, and a cold neutrality is inexcusable. To use the words (with the alteration of a single word) of Archdeacon Daubeny: When I see so many apparently idle and unconcerned, whilst the enemy is digging and undermining the very ground on which they stand; and at the same time consider, that they who help not to support the church when she is in distress, do in reality contribute to pull her down; in writing as an honest *lay-member* of that church ought to write on her subject, I feel that satisfaction which must ever accompany a conscientious discharge of duty.

I am sensible that the doctrines maintained in the following pages are become unpopular in this age of boasted illumination; that they are too contracted for the expansive liberality, or (to speak more justly) the religious indifference of the times, and that the maintainers of them are branded with the name of *bigots*. Professing myself to be one of those bigots, and being perfectly satisfied with the company in which I am placed, my only hope is, that I may be thought worthy to continue in it.

To this important subject, the attention of the English and Scotch clergy has been turned for some years past, and by them the world has been favoured with some excellent treatises. I shall mention three in particular: 1. *A Guide to the Church*, by the Rev. C. Daubeney, Archdeacon of Sarum, 2d edit. 1804, strongly recommended by the Bishops of Gloucester and Lincoln. 2. *Primitive Order Vindicated*, in answer to Campbell's Lectures, by the Right Rev. Dr Skinner, Bishop of Aberdeen, 1803. 3. *The Nature and Guilt of Schism*, &c. in eight sermons, preached before the University of Oxford, by the Rev. T. Le Mesurier, 1808.—It is to be lamented, that very few indeed of these, or of similar publications have been imported into this country.

The following treatise, the reader will perceive, is almost entirely *compiled* from the writings of our celebrated divines. This method of compilation I preferred, not only on account of the success which appears to have attended some late compilations of a similar nature, particularly Bishop

Huntingford's *Call to English Protestants*,—but, to use the words of Dr Wake, “I hoped that quotations from departed writers of great and deserved fame, would find a more general and unprejudiced acceptance with all sorts of men, than any thing that could be written by any one now living, who, if esteemed by some, is yet in danger of being despised by more.” Accordingly, as it is in general collected from authors, many of whom flourished above a hundred years since, the reader is to expect, not elegance of style, but a plain and correct statement of facts, accompanied, I hope, with correspondent reasoning. At the same time, although I have managed this dispute in a manner somewhat different from other authors, and have endeavoured to reduce the tedious and intricate disputes about schism, church authority, church establishments, &c. into a clear, regular, and consistent method; yet it will easily be perceived, that my *principles* are the very same, that have been constantly received and maintained, with very few exceptions, by all the learned divines of our church*.

* The opinions maintained in this treatise are absurdly described as belonging to the *high church school*, as if there were now such parties in the church as high church and low church. The latter, as every one knows, has for many years disappeared; it did not flourish greatly even in the days of Hoadley, and seems to have expired with Archdeacon Blackburne. It could never in fact have been in high repute,—for it must always have borne the appearance of hollowness and treachery. See *Le Mesurier's Bampton Lect.* p. 431. —Even papists themselves acknowledge that, at present, “both learned and unlearned doctors condemn the Hoadleyan theory on

If any of our Romanists will be pleased to consider what I have said with respect to the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome, with that attention and impartiality which is due to religious subjects, I presume to think he will perceive, that the christian religion does not oblige him to acknowledge the Bishop of Rome's authority in this kingdom. It will plainly appear, that such universal authority has no foundation in the scriptures, and that it was unknown to the primitive Fathers, who conceived themselves obliged to hold communion with him (or any other Bishop,) only so long as he continued catholic and orthodox; but when he became an heretic, we find that the Bishops of those pure ages anathematized him, and refused to have any communication with him. How much more excusable, then, are our Reformed Churches for rejecting his communion, since he not only invades the primitive rights of Bishops, but attempts to obtrude on us, as articles of faith, his decrees, which are contrary to reason, scripture, and the primitive Fathers *.

the nature of church government. *Protestant Apology*, &c. 1809, p. 36.

* Those men must surely be very ignorant of the nature and spirit of Popery, who suppose that there is no necessity, at present, of exposing the pernicious errors of the Romish Church, and of guarding our people against being infected by them. Let such men consider well the following words of Bishop Stillingfleet:—“ While we have such restless adversaries (as the Romish priests) to deal with, part of our danger lies in being too secure of the goodness of our cause.” *Dedication to Anthony, Earl of Shaftsbury*, Vol. V. 117.

As for the performance itself, I must expect from the christian reader some favourable allowances, for any oversights and imperfections that may be found in it. And if at any time I have either mistaken or misrepresented the church, in defence of which I write, I shall, upon information, with all due submission acknowledge the error. To conclude, I earnestly beseech Almighty God of his infinite mercy, to make all those who shall peruse this book, honest and impartial, diligent in the search of truth, and heartily willing not only to receive, but also to acknowledge conviction.

*Trinity College, Dublin,
May 1. 1811.*

PREFACE

TO THE

SECOND EDITION.

THE decided approbation given to the Treatise on the Government of the Church by characters of the first eminence, and the rapid sale of it beyond my expectation, have induced me to prepare for the press a new and improved edition, in which I have spared neither labour nor expence in rendering it still more deserving of the approbation of the Friends of the Church.

It must be highly gratifying to all true lovers of Primitive Truth and Order to find that, in this age of indifference and lukewarmness, the principles which I have *contributed* my endeavours to restore, have met with even a tolerable reception, when the very contrary might have been expected. Yet still, it will require no ordinary exertions in all the friends of the church, with the assistance of God's holy spirit, to bring back their erring brethren to that blessed state of unity described in the Acts, in which the christian people are represented as "*remaining steadfastly, not only in the doctrine and worship of the apostles, but also in their FELLOWSHIP.*"

It has been observed of late, that there is much less of Infidelity among us, than there was some years ago; but that there unfortunately prevails among Protestants in general, a sort of imperfect christianity, which, supposing a certain knowledge of the fundamentals of *doctrine*, considers every thing else as totally unimportant. This observation is extremely just, and perfectly applicable to the present times. But let us apply it more explicitly to the respective bodies of those who profess the tenets of Protestantism.

The Protestants of Great Britain and Ireland are divided into two great bodies, viz. those who are not members of the church and those who are. Of the former the Presbyterians, Independents and Methodists are the most numerous; and it is of importance in the present case to observe, that, beside the profession of the true faith, they all appear to admit the necessity of church society and church governors of some description or other. Some among them even contend zealously for the divine right of their respective forms of church government*, but it may be observed, that in general they consider this as totally unimportant, and left undetermined in the scriptures. But this is an extremely unscriptural and

* The independents have of late years manifested a wonderful zeal in inculcating the *necessity* of attending to church government and unity. The following extract from what is entitled the Scripture Magazine, edited by the Scotch Independents, will, I am confident, be readily subscribed by every true Churchman: "Another thing, which greatly tends to hinder the progress of the gospel, is the *glaring inattention* to the *nature* of a Church of Christ, mani-

dangerous sentiment. Christ and his holy apostles, as I think I have clearly proved, instituted but one form of church government and communion, and confined the covenanted means of salvation to the *living* members of this one communion, and to none other. The characteristic mark by which this communion is distinguished from all other societies, is, that it is governed by the order of Bishops maintaining the true faith and worship. To separate from this society without the strongest reasons constitutes the sin of schism so pointedly condemned in the scriptures, and with the nature of which Protestant Dissenters of all descriptions appear to be entirely unacquainted. "He that is not with the Bishop, (as the celebrated Bishop Taylor remarks,) is not in the church, that is, he that goes away from him willingly and separates himself, departs from God's church; and whether he can then be with God, is a very material consideration, and fit to be thought on by all that think heaven a more eligible good than the interests of a faction, and the important desire of rule can countervail.— (*Consecration Serm.* Dub. 1660. Pref.) Or to use

festated by those who profess to be most deeply interested in the conversion of sinners. The common opinion on this subject is, that if sinners are brought to the knowledge of the truth, all is well; and as to forms of social institution and worship, they are deemed quite unnecessary, or, at any rate, of but trifling importance. But how can the effects of christianity be expected to follow in assemblies, where the *union* and *fellowship* of the body of Christ do not appear?—Edinb. 1809. p. 192.

the words of another luminary of the church in Ireland, the great Archbishop Usher, and which are applicable to the present time: SCHISM, says he, a thing deeply to be thought of by the Ismaels of our time, who forsake the fellowship of the saints, and by a sacrilegious *separation* break this bond of peace. Little do these men consider, how precious the peace of the church ought to be in our eyes (to be redeemed with a thousand of our lives,) and of what dangerous consequence this matter of SCHISM is unto their own souls.— For howsoever the SCHISMATIC, *secundum affectum* (as the schoolmen speak) in his intention and wicked purposes, taketh away unity from the church; yet *secundum effectum*, in truth and in very deed, he taketh away the unity only from himself; that is, he cutteth himself off from being united with the rest of the body; and being dis-severed from the body, how is it possible that he should retain communion with the head? *Sermon on the Universality of the Church.* See also the *Homily against Contention.*

Such are the deplorable consequences of rejecting or being in a separation from Orthodox Episcopal Communion, and which ought to be carefully attended to by the Presbyterians, Methodists, &c. of the present day. With their bible in their hands, and prejudice laid aside, let the subject be brought to a fair and impartial hearing. With this view the bible is put into their hands; and they are required, after the example of the noble

Bereans, to search and examine, whether what has been said on the subject of the church be agreeable to the tenor of the apostolic writings. For this is the standard to which all opinions upon the subject must ultimately be referred.

It has been, I must confess, a considerable injury to the cause of Episcopacy, that its defenders have not paid, in general, sufficient attention to the scripture proofs of its divine institution, but have relied too much on the testimony of the Fathers, and other human authorities. Such has been the general outcry of Presbyterians, &c. against Episcopalians, and often with too much foundation. "Advocates of proper Episcopacy (says a late Presbyterian writer) do rest its claim to a *divine right* principally, if not solely, on the writings of the Fathers, virtually admitting that the scriptures are not so clear and decisive on the subject, but wise and good men may disagree in their interpretation of them."

Another considerable objection to the general prevalence of Episcopacy, has arisen from that absurd idea, entertained by its adversaries ever since the Reformation, that it is unfavourable to civil liberty, and that it can only subsist under an absolute monarchy.

Thus, the last mentioned writer lays it to the charge of Episcopacy, that she contends that Presbytery is too *democratical* in its constitution to have any pretensions to a *divine* origin. It seems, indeed, to be one of that church's theological axioms, that no form of government, civil

or ecclesiastical, is *of God*, but absolute monarchy alone. Doubtless there have been Episcopalians who have maintained such opinions, but then the blame ought in reason to be laid to their charge, and not to that of Episcopacy. Christ did not institute any particular form of government, nor require his apostles and their followers to establish a monarchy wherever they established a church, but merely to live in rational obedience to the "*powers that are*," whether monarchical or republican. In short, Episcopacy is perfectly compatible with an *universal* religion. For "an Episcopal Church may or may not be incorporated with the state; and Episcopacy has in fact adapted itself to all the forms of civil government that have existed in the world since the commencement of the christian æra." *British Critic*, 1812. p. 475.

The cause of Episcopacy has likewise suffered much from not "attending to what is original and apostolic in its constitution, and distinguishing what is accidental from what is essential." A learned Bishop found it necessary to request the attention of all parties to this necessary caution, at a time when the cause of Episcopacy had sunk very low indeed. For, says he, he that takes things in gross (as most do) without examination, and looks upon Bishops as persons dignified with titles of honour, possess with lands and revenues, having under them (as the late Covenant set them out attended) Deans, Archdeacons, Chancellors, Commissaries, &c. for the

exercise of jurisdiction, will peradventure think there can be nothing apostolical in Episcopacy. (*Episcopacy and Presbytery considered*, by H. Ferne, D.D. Lond. 1647.) See *Note*, p. 135 of this *Treatise*.

Such is the nature of the scriptural Episcopacy for which I contend; and again I entreat our adversaries not to be too wise in their own conceits, but to "*search the scriptures whether these things be so*," and not to give up their reason so entirely to their own guides as if they conceived them to be infallible. And, to use the words of Mr Dodwell, for *God's* sake, for your *soul's* sake, for the *church's* sake, I beg of you that you would not reject these things for *my* sake, because the *proponent* is contemptible. The question is not, whether you should be of my opinion, but whether you should not beware of being *guilty of the sin of schism*, and being *accessary* to those *divisions* which you do so seriously deplore *? Our Saviour did not deny the *scripture* when quoted by the *Devil*,—and I hope you

* The evil consequences arising from divisions are acknowledged by all parties. "They are among the chief obstacles to the progress of the gospel. Scoffers triumph in our divisions, and the world in general is stumbled. *Answer to Ewing*, by A. Carson (an independent teacher,) Edinb. 1809. Pref. "I am persuaded (says Bishop Stillingfleet,) that all the arguments in Bellarmin, and other books that ever were written, have not done so much to make Papists in this country, as the multitude of sects among ourselves." *Unreasonableness of Separation*, Pref.

Since the Papists thus derive such benefits from the divisions among Protestants, we may conclude, that they do all in their

will not disown the *truth* from a christian, though *weak and unworthy* to be called so. St Augustine never got more honour by any thing than by his *Retractations*. And I know I need not tell you that no *victory* is more glorious than to be *overcome by truth*.

With respect to the great body of Protestants who are members of the Episcopal Communion, it must be mentioned with pleasure, that a large majority of them are pious and steadfast adherers to the Church, cautiously *avoiding even the appearance of that evil* SCHISM, against which they are taught to pray; and that both among the clergy and laity, there are many now alive who have been highly instrumental in guarding their brethren against false principles, and have considerably promoted the cause of genuine christianity, and the credit of our Reformed Church. But still it cannot be denied, that too many of her members appear to be totally unacquainted with the necessity and advantages of church communion. And even in the Episcopal Church in

power to increase them, and prevent their uniting in the same communion. Thus, they have sent their emissaries amongst us, under the garb of puritans, to preach against the church and the common prayer; and it is a positive fact, the Quakers owe their origin to those abominable arts of the Papists. See *The Missionaries' Arts Discovered*, 1688, and *Foxes and Firebrands*. Hubert Languet, Ambassador of the Elector of Saxony at Vienna, wrote from thence in 1574, that "the Pope dreaded nothing more than our UNION, which he declared would be the cause of his destruction, if it took place." *Episc. Commenius, De Bono Unitatis et Ordinis*, Amst. 1662. p. 54. dedicated to Charles II.

Scotland (the discipline of which has always been preserved stricter than in her sister churches,) it has become, as a zealous Presbyter of that communion laments, a prevailing opinion, that there is no difference of any moment between the present (Presbyterian,) Establishment and the Episcopal Church; and consequently that there is no ground for preferring the communion of the one to the other, except in taste or convenience; and what renders the matter worse, they who entertain this opinion are confident in asserting, and zealous in recommending it; and at the same time take to themselves no little praise for being, as they phrase it, *charitable, moderate, and liberal in their sentiments*. See *The Difference between the Episcopal Church, and the Presbyterian Establishment in Scotland*, 1811.

Such opinions and practices are undoubtedly evils of the greatest magnitude, and which require the united exertions of the clergy and laity to counteract in due time. It is not so much to the efforts of her enemies, as to the long continued supineness of her own sons, that this general laxity of principle in the church is to be imputed. The clergy have solemnly promised at their ordination to "be ready, with all faithful diligence, to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's word," and it is chiefly to their exertions we must look for the preservation of the unity of the church. "It is incumbent on *us*, stewards and ministers of the gospel

(says the present apostolic Bishop of St Davids,) to see, that the people committed to our charge, especially our poorer brethren, be not left ignorant of so essential a part of the knowledge and duty of a christian, as the knowledge of the nature and constitution of the Church of Christ, and of the duties of church fellowship and christian Unity. Ignorance is the foundation of Schism: Ignorance of the great duty of christian unity, and the great sin of dissension and disunion. It is ignorance which exposes men to be "*carried about with every wind of doctrine,*" and to be confounded by "*oppositions of science, falsely so called.*" *First Principles*, Pref.

There are two extremely improper practices I shall here take notice of, which have arisen from that general ignorance of sound principles so prevalent at present, and have contributed more than any thing else to the increase of schism and disunion. The first I allude to is the scandalous practice of the members of the church occasionally frequenting the meeting-houses, and chapels of Methodists, Papists, and other Sectaries. Nothing almost can be more *unscriptural* and more at variance with the discipline of the purest ages of the church, (See p. 145.) If a member of our communion be even invited to attend a charity sermon at such places, let him send his alms (if he is so inclined,) but let him not scandalise his christian profession by countenancing those who "*make divisions contrary to the doctrine which he*

has learned. That excellent little book, *The Faith and Practice of a Church of England-Man*, by Dean Stanley, very explicitly represents the opinion of a churchman on this head: "I conscientiously forbear going to any *irregular unlawful* assemblies, though only out of curiosity, because my being there but once, and out of no bad design, is a giving them countenance and encouragement, and is also a putting myself out of God's protection, by tempting him in running myself into evil and danger, which he may justly suffer me to fall into; and again, I *religiously abstain* from communicating with any *heretical or schismatical* congregation, for they break the *unity of the body of Christ*, and disobey lawful authority in the church," &c. See the *5th Dublin Edition*, 1738, published by the Bishop of Kilmore, p. 34.

Nearly in an equal degree injurious to the unity of the church, and unpropitious to the cause of christianity, are those societies formed lately for the purpose of distributing bibles to the poor, and composed of *Churchmen and Dissenters* of all descriptions*. For can we consider any society to be propitious to the cause of general christianity, which presents the novel spectacle of *Churchmen and Dissenters* of every kind, not even ex-

* I allude in particular to the British and Foreign Bible Society. It is not from the distribution of bibles that the adversaries of the *mixed societies* apprehend danger. On the contrary, they are all unanimous in asserting that the more widely the scriptures are disseminated, the greater in all respects must be the good produced.

cepting Socinians, joining hand in hand to present the Bible as the common standard of their respective opinions. Can any thing be more likely to produce a total indifference to all the modes of faith, than this strange and unnatural combination? And will they not lead the objects of their bounty to suppose, that each admits the peculiar tenets of the rest to be really contained in scripture. A more ingenious project for neutralising the sacred pages never was invented.— But the poor are not only thus exposed to the hazard of confounding true and false doctrine by the provision of such societies, but their reverence for the priesthood is also necessarily diminished by it. When they are told that every clergyman is, on account of his sacred function, a member of the committee, and that every Dissenting teacher and Methodist preacher is, for the same reason, invested with the same privilege;—what inference must they be expected to draw, but this, that in the opinion of this great and increasing society, there is no difference between the characters and pretensions of those various persons, to whom it has thus given equal rank in its committee.

But even without arguing from its proper and natural consequences, it is the bounden duty of every true churchman to oppose such combinations, being plainly contrary to those commands of the apostles, which forbid us to consent to go hand in hand, and have one common object in religious matters, with heretics or schismatics

of any description*. I am sorry, observes the zealous Wordsworth, to recognise the names of several clergymen of known respectability, whose precipitance and ill-disciplined disposition to be doing good, without due enquiry concerning the *means*, has drawn them in to become dupes of this indigested and pernicious undertaking; I intreat they will *re-consider* their doings. If, says Dr Marsh, churchmen in general resolved to act by themselves in the distribution of bibles and prayer books, and Dissenters formed another society for the distribution of bibles alone, the two societies might act, without mutual bitterness, and without an encroachment on each others rights. — Surely harmony may be preserved without requiring that one party shall sacrifice to the other.

Having now distinctly shewn in what manner this Treatise is applicable to Protestants in general, I shall next consider it in reference to the members of the Romish Church. The corrupt religion of this once powerful sect, we must recollect, is not extinct. It has indeed, of late years wonderfully revived, and rears its crest in these realms with all the ardour of confidence. Miracles, too, are pretended to be wrought in testi-

* The Committee of the Belfast branch of this Bible Society (*Address*, Belf. 1812. p.3.) speak of it in very appropriate terms: "Do we not here behold a new thing upon earth? Christians of different denominations forgetting their differences," &c. A new thing indeed (*novum monstrum in terris*,) totally unknown since the first preaching of Jesus Christ to the present time!

mony of what is called the Catholic Church, and every endeavour is used to seduce individuals from our communion. The exposing of the false and pernicious tenets of that church may therefore be considered as being now especially our duty, not only as we are bound at all times to oppose falsehood and to maintain truth, but as it is again become a necessary measure of self defence.

Although every possible method * is exerted

* Whoever reads any books written by heretics (or Protestants,) without permission of the holy See, by virtue of the *Bulla Cœnæ*, incurs excommunication *ipso facto*. See *Arsdekin. Theologia*, p. 174. "Sublato omni proprio judicio, paratus semper sit animus ad obediendum Ecclesiæ." *Exercit. Spirit. Ig. Loyolæ, Reg. I.*—"Si quod oculis nostris apparet album, Ecclesia nigrum definierit, debemus quod nigrum sit pronunciare." *Reg. 13.*—The chief way by which the Roman Church keeps her sheep within her fold (as Dr Geddes observes,) is that of having brought them under a *perfect bondage of thought* to her, by teaching them magisterially, that the having the *least doubt or scruple* in their minds concerning the truth of any of her dictates, is a most damnable sin. Neither is there any doctrine so frequently and so powerfully driven and rivetted into the people by their confessors, as this: The sinfulness of all the mortal sins, being neither so exaggerated, nor punished with so severe and long a penance as the having had any *doubts* concerning the Roman Faith. And must not all who are held in Popery purely by the bondage of thought (which is the care of the great body of its professors,) if they had been born of Jewish or Heathen parents, and had taken the same meritorious course, been of the Jewish or Heathen religion? See *Geddes's View of the methods by which the Roman Church keeps her people from coming to the knowledge of her great and manifold errors, &c. Tracts*, Vol. III. And it may be farther remarked that the belief of the Romish doctrines does not consist altogether in the *truth* of them, but in the *faith* of the believer: for let them be true or false, if they be receiv-

to prevent their members from using their private judgment in religious matters, yet I am humbly of opinion, that if any of them will be pleased to read what I have said concerning the marks of the church, and the rule of faith, they will perceive clearly that they are obliged, on their own principles, to compare their doctrines with the only infallible rule of faith, the Word of God. According to that rule, they will discover that they are undoubtedly bound to “*believe not every spirit,*” but to “*search the scriptures**,” and “*examine themselves whether they be in the faith;*” by this rule they will perceive that, although the apostles were infallible in delivering the faith they had received from the Holy Ghost, yet their successors in the ministry were infallible, only as far as they adhered to the sacred deposit; they will perceive, that many even of the immediate successors of the apostles erred in matters of faith and discipline;—that the Bishops and Clergy, in subjection to the Bishop of Rome, have also erred in

ed with an affected ignorance and blind obedience, the party shall be quite secure: “If a simple person believe his Bishop when he preaches any heretical doctrine, in believing this falsehood, he shall perform a meritorious act.” *Card. Tolet. De Instructione Sacra. Lib. IV. 6. 3.*

* This they may have an excellent opportunity of doing by the perusal of our *uncorrupt* reformed translation of the holy scriptures. The Reformed Church is certainly much indebted to the Rev. Richard Grier of Middleton for his clear and masterly *defence* of her authorized version of the scriptures, lately published, in answer to Ward’s Pretended *Errata* of the same.

matters of faith and discipline,—and that every true christian is under the strongest obligations to “*mark and avoid*” those Bishops and Clergy, who “*cause divisions contrary to the doctrine*” they have learned, and hold “*accursed even angels themselves, who teach any other doctrine*” than that which the apostles themselves delivered.

It is on these grounds that we call on the members of the Romish Church, to forsake their heretical Bishops, and return to the unity of Christ’s Catholic Church, as maintained in the Reformed Church. For it preserves not only an undoubted succession of Bishops, but what is infinitely of more importance, a succession of apostolic doctrine and worship; for their doctrine and worship are plainly such as the apostles themselves professed, and taught in the holy scriptures.

I refer the reader however to the Second Part of this Treatise, in which our Reformed Church is, I hope, evidently proved, in opposition to the Romish party, to be a sound and orthodox portion of the Catholic Church; and to which all Romanists are bound, at their peril, to unite themselves.

It has been enquired of me, why I have paid such particular attention to the confutation of the Bishop of Rome’s Supremacy, and neglected others which are more immediately of dangerous consequence to the souls of the Romanists. To this I shall answer in the words of one who was

once a member of the Romish Church: As I have ever believed, says he, that the chief and most important point among all the controversies betwixt the Catholic Reformed and the Romish Church, is that of the Primacy of the Pope, and whether he be Vicar of Jesus Christ on earth, universal and general Bishop of all christians, and be head and superior of the Catholic Church,—so it was the first motive of my conversion, and that which I esteemed to have most need to be well considered, as being the ground of all Romish belief, which once overturned, she must of necessity fall to the ground. And howsoever there may be many other points of great importance, this nevertheless is as the centre, where all the rest do meet, and the axletree on which they all move, and the foundation that upholdeth them. *The Christian and Catholic Verity, or the Reasons and Manner of the Conversion of Fr. de Neville, formerly a Capuchin Preacher, &c.* Lond. 1642. p. 46*.

It is unnecessary to enumerate here all the additions and improvements that have been made in this Second Edition. They are all, I am convinced, of the utmost importance and necessity. I hope, that the repeated intimations I

* We look on the supremacy of the Pope, and his unjust usurpation over kings and his fellow-bishops, as the fundamental article of Popery, and it is required by the second canon of the Church of Ireland, of every preacher to the utmost of his wit, knowledge, and learning to preach against it four times a year. *Bishop Sheridan's Sermon at St Warburghs, Dublin, 1685.*

have made, that the Church is at present in a state of danger, will appear to none unseasonable. My object is not so much to *alarm* as to *forewarn*. In this opinion, in which I am not alone, I am sorry to be obliged to dissent from the learned and zealous Archdeacon of Stafford in his *Charge* to the *Clergy* of his Archdeaconry, June 1812*. "I have no manner or degree of apprehension (says he,) that this sect, or *these* sects of Methodists, will continue to be extended, to the serious injury or ultimate subversion of the Church." I should heartily agree with the learned Archdeacon in this conclusion (to use the words of the Critic,) did I not perceive in all orders of men in the Established Church,—in the clergy as well as the laity,—a lukewarmness and indifference; which, as they were the cause of removing the candlestick of at least one ancient church out of its place, *may* be productive of a similar effect in the Church of England, (*British Critic*, May 1813, p. 458†.)

* The Archdeacon has been pleased to honour the first edition of this Treatise in the following terms: "See an excellent digest of all the best works on this subject, lately published at Dublin under the title of A Treatise on the Government of the Church, &c. By Edward Barwick, Esq. of Trin. Coll. Dublin." p. 9.

† It is a matter equally of surprise and concern (says Dr Magee, speaking of the Methodists,) that a system, which no longer covertly but openly and avowedly, works in *continued hostility* to the established religion, has not met with more effectual resistance from those who may be supposed to take an interest in the well being of the establishment. *Discourses on Atonement*, I. p. 159.

In order, if possible, to obviate such serious calamities, I have taken the liberty of making a few remarks (in *Appendix*, No. III.) which, if seasonably attended to, would, I am convinced, essentially serve to promote the good of the Church, and repress the growth of Schism. But let me remind the reader, that it is not the aid of the civil power, or the revival of schism bills I should desire to see called in (as some may insinuate,) in order to obtain these desirable ends ; unless I had been fully convinced that the Church is able to defend and support herself, even in a state of total independence on the legislature, I should never have written a line in defence of her. We surely mistake the spirit of the gospel, says the late excellent Bishop Wilson, when we would establish and defend the Church by human policy and carnal means, by friendship of great men, credit, reputation, splendor, riches, &c. God will have us to use other sort of arms, namely, patience, humility, meekness, prayers, suffering, and *spiritual* censures, to which he will join his own almighty power.—2 Cor. x. 4.

It has been justly observed, and it is confirmed by experience, that a correct use of terms of denomination is of more importance to the cause of truth than is generally supposed. I shall explain my reasons for using certain terms in a different manner from that of the generality of our divines. It were much to be wished, that they were all unanimous in this respect. I have taken the liberty

of applying to the Episcopal churches in general, the title of the REFORMED or REFORMED EPISCOPAL CHURCH, in opposition to the UNREFORMED, or rather DEFORMED Church of Rome, and likewise to the merely negative term *Protestant*. —“As to the general term Protestant (says the learned Bishop Lloyd,) I am not at all satisfied with it, and I have both reason and experience to warrant me in this dislike,” (See his *Refor. Cath.* Lond. 1679. p. 3.) I cannot admit the word Protestant, (says another zealous writer,) as a name whereby to distinguish *my* church or profession. I think that, if I were asked, *what church are you of*, or, *what religion do you profess*, and I answered *I am a Protestant*, this would be a very imperfect account of myself and my faith; and all that could be gathered from such an answer would be, that I were of a *negative religion*, or rather of *any*, no matter which, so it be not Popery. Let us in God’s name *protest* to the utmost against Popery, but let not that name (which is pretended to *unite* us,) by shuffling away all distinction, betray us into a *schism* from best apostolic mother. *True Churchman and Loyal Subject*, Dedicated to the Clergy. Lond. 1710. p. 3. 9.

I have cautiously abstained from giving to the *Romish Church* the title of *the Catholic Church*, or to the *Papists* or *Romanists* that of *the Catholics*. The application of this term, observes Mr Bowles, amounts to nothing less than an admission that they constitute, *exclusively*, the *universal*

church of Christ, and that Protestants form no part of that church. That, by the assumption of the term, the former should endeavour to inculcate such a doctrine, proves that there are no bounds to the exorbitancy of their claims ; but that the latter should recognise a claim of this description, which they do whenever they denominate the members of the Romish Church *Catholics*, is a proof of inconsideration or rather of folly, which scarcely admits of an adequate description. *Letter to Whitbread*, Lond. 1807.— See also Le Mesurier's *Address*, Lond. 1810.

The title of *Established Church* and *Established Religion*, and *Establishment*, applied as an epithet of *distinction* to the Church in England and Ireland, is of dangerous consequence, and leads one to imagine that the church is merely a civil institution, and solely dependent on the magistrates' will. This epithet ought to be dropped, at least by the members of those churches *. The Scotch Kirk herself cannot bear that it should be applied to her, but conceives that the application of it amounts to no less than "unchurching all the inhabitants of this land," (*i. e.* Scotland,) except-

* It ought to be more known, than it appears to be at present, that the title of *established* cannot with propriety be applied *exclusively* to the church. For are not the Dissenters protected by the legislature, and their ministers paid by it equally with those of the church? "Dr Stock might have known (says Dr Campbell, a dissenting teacher at Armagh,) that there are two *established* churches in England and Ireland, and that the Dissenters mode of worship is established."

ing those who are not established. Mitchell's *Presb. Letters*, 1809. p. 9 *.

In short, let us lay aside all such narrow schismatical terms, which have an evident tendency

* The application of the term the "Church of England" to the Episcopal Church in Ireland and in Scotland, nay even in America, is ridiculous, and extremely unnatural in the mouth of a Reformed Episcopalian. It was partly by applying the term the Church of Rome to all those churches which she converted or brought into subjection, that produced that absurd title, the Roman Catholic Church. In the primitive times, christians were never denominated such from the particular country in which they happened to be born (as a member of the Church of Carthage, &c.) but from their christian profession: *Christian* is our name, says Pacian, and *Catholic* our surname.—I could wish (says Mr Grascome) that we did make use of the good old words, as well as stand up for the good old truth, and not give the Romanists the advantage to shelter their errors and ill practices under good old names, to whom they are unjustly applied. I know no reason why, whilst we maintain the catholic faith we should not denominate ourselves catholics (or English Catholics,) and this would oblige the Romanists for distinction's sake to call their proselytes (English) Roman Catholics, the absurdity whereof would, in a great measure, appear from the very terms. *Answer to Huddleston*, 1703.—That which distinguishes a true Papist from a true Protestant is no more than this, that the former will needs be a Roman, and the latter only a Catholic. *Potter's Charity mistaken*, Ox. 1633.—The title of Pope as applied to the Bishop of Rome ought likewise to be laid aside amongst us, and the primitive title Bishop of Rome substituted. For this name Pope, which the silly *people admire*, God wot, as a *most sacred thing*, and for all that, know no more what it means, than how far it is to heaven, was given of old indifferently to all Bishops. *Thomas Bell's Trial of the New Religion*, Lond. 1608.—The civil terms, LORD Bishop, Rector, Vicar, Incumbent, Dignitary, &c. might likewise be used less seldom, and the apostolic ones Bishop and Presbyter adopted. Bishop Burnet remarks, that according to the gross, but common abuse of our language, the names of *cures* or *parishes*, which are the ecclesiastical names, are now

to mislead the wavering and ignorant, and as we have restored the true apostolic faith and worship, let us also restore and adopt the primitive terms and epithets, since we find by experience that so much depends on a proper use of them.

If any of our sectarian brethren, either Protestant or Popish, will be pleased to consider this Treatise deserving of an answer, I earnestly entreat them to adhere as close as possible to the subject in debate, and to lay aside every thing that is irrelevant and unnecessary. Let us, to use the words of Dr Hickee to his Popish adversary, strip ourselves of all superfluous words, digressions, jests, or other artifices of prolonging the dispute, and shut ourselves up to be tried by the force of our reasons alone, which if we have the assurance to do, we shall soon see the arms drop out of the hands of one of us.—Let us remember also, that we must give an account of what we write to that great judge, who searches the heart and tries the reins; and consider that every false colour, every disguise, and much more every gross falsehood, is an affront to God himself, and an injury to the souls of our neighbours; and that bitterness and calumny are not only inconsistent with a christian spirit, but deaden the force of our argument.

swallowed up into that of *living*, which carries a *carnal* idea in the very sound of the word, and I doubt not a *more carnal effect* on the minds of both clergy and laity. *Pastoral Care.*

Before I conclude, I make it my request to the reader, who wishes to derive any benefit from this Treatise, to suspend his judgment, till he has read with some attention *one* Part of it at least. For there are many passages which, if taken out of their connection, may be liable to gross misinterpretations, and chargeable with the most absurd consequences.

Trinity College, Dublin,
July 1. 1813.

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INTRODUCTION.

THERE is no article of the Christian Faith, as laid down in our public creeds, that seems to be so strangely misunderstood, and so little attended to, as that in which we are taught to profess our belief of the Holy Catholic Church. And the mistakes and inattention so prevalent in regard to that important point are the more to be regretted, as the baneful consequences arising from this unhappy cause, daily exhibit an increasing tendency to disorder, confusion, and every evil work.

On this important subject all information that is absolutely necessary, is to be obtained from an accurate examination of the Word of God alone. "Because (says Chrysostom,) at this time heresy has infected the Church, the Divine Scriptures only can afford a proof of genuine christianity, and a refuge to those who are desirous of arriving at the truth of Faith. Formerly, it could be evinced by various means which was the true Church of Christ,—which the Church of the

INTRODUCTION.

Gentiles; but at present there is no other method left to those who are willing to discover the true church of Christ, but the Scriptures only,—and why? Because heresy has all outward observances in common with her. If a man, therefore, be desirous of knowing the true Church of Christ, how will he be able to do it, amidst so great a resemblance, but by the Holy Scriptures only? Wherefore our Lord, foreseeing that such a great confusion of things would take place in the latter days, orders the christians who are desirous of arriving at the firmness of Faith, to have recourse to nothing but the Holy Scriptures; for if they look up to any thing else, they will be scandalized, and will perish, as not understanding which is the true Church*.”

* How St Chrysostom could write the above passage and yet regard the doctrine of *private judgment* as *heretical*, is a paradox (as a convert from the Romish Church observes,) which all the fine spun subtleties of modern schoolmen, would find it difficult to unravel. *Rev. H. Wharton's Reply to Carroll*, p. 29. 1788.

A

TREATISE ON THE CHURCH, &c. &c.

PART FIRST.

CHAP. I.

OF THE NATURE AND CONSTITUTION OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

TO understand the nature and design of the Catholic Church, we must consider the world at large as lying in wickedness, and consequently in a state of condemnation before God. Out of this wicked society, of which all are by nature born members, God has been pleased to call men into another society very different from it; the object of which is to minister to their salvation, by so purifying them from the corruptions of a fallen world, that they may not be condemned with it. This society is sometimes called the *Church of Christ*, because he purchased it with his blood,—sometimes his *Kingdom*, because he is the king and governor of it,—and sometimes, as in the apostles' creed, the holy *Catholic Church*; which term *Catholic* was early applied to it, not only to declare its universality, and that it is not confined to one nation

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or country, as the Jewish church was ; but, more especially, to signify the orthodox faith and communion it maintains, and to distinguish it from the assemblies of heretics and schismatics.

In general, the Catholic Church may be thus defined: *It is the one universal Society of all christian people, incorporated by the new covenant in baptism, under Jesus Christ its supreme head,—and distributed under lawful governors and pastors, into particular churches holding communion with each other, in all the essentials of christian Faith, and Worship, and Government.* Or more briefly, *It is the Society of all faithful christians, under their lawful Bishops and Pastors* *.

This is agreeable to the characteristic marks or notes of the church given in the holy scriptures, where the primitive christians are represented as having adhered to the apostles' Doctrine, Worship, and Fellowship, *i. e.* in their communion and under their authority. "*They continued stedfastly,*" says St Luke, "*in the apostles' doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers,*" (Acts ii 42.—1 John i. 3.) In strict conformity with this is the definition given by our Reformed Church in the 19th Article, in which "the Visible Church" is described to be "a congregation† of faith-

* Although this definition of the Catholic Church is applicable merely to the church militant on earth, yet there is a more extensive signification of it, and of the greatest importance in our disputes with the Romanists. For the Catholic Church includes not only the orthodox christians of this age, but of all ages since the first plantation of christian churches. I do not, says that accurate Scotch divine, Bishop Sage, take the Catholic Church of Christ to be any thing *now*, nor its communion to be *another* communion than it was in St Paul, St Ignatius, St Cyprian, or St Augustine's age.

† The term *congregation* in this place, did not, when the Articles were made, imply a single assembly of christians, as the Independents

ful men, in which the pure word of God is preached, and the *sacraments duly administered* according to Christ's ordinance, in all things that of necessity are requisite to the same." For the sacraments cannot, in the judgment of our church, be *duly* administered according to Christ's ordinance, but by those ministers who are "lawfully called and sent into the Lord's vineyard," (Art. 23. compared with the Offices of Ordination.)—That these are the true notes or marks by which the Catholic Church is to be known, is the opinion of our most eminent divines*: Wherever (says Dr King, Archbishop of Dublin) we find the *faith* of Christ, and the persons professing it, living in submission to their *regular pastors*, there we have found a branch of the Catholic Church. It is by these marks we must find the Catholic Church, if we would not mistake the society of schismatics and heretics, nay of heathens for her. We maintain (says Dr Bramhall, Archbishop of Armagh) that an entire profession of *saving truth*, a right use of the *word* and *sacraments*, and an union under *lawful pastors*, being taken jointly, do distinguish the church essentially from all other societies in the world.

assert, but had precisely the same signification as the term *Catholic Church*. Indeed the two terms were at that time considered so perfectly synonymous, that, in the translation of the bible then used, Christ is called, "*the head of the congregation, which is his body*," and is mentioned as saying to Peter, "*on this rock I will build my congregation*."

* *King's Answer to Manby*, Dub. 1687, p. 5. 54. *Bramhall's Works*, p. 143. *Bingham's Works*, Book VI. 3. and XVI. 17. *Field of the Church*, p. 31. 80. *Sherlock's Discourse on the Notes, and Vind. of do. in the Preserv. against Popery*, Vol. I. *Kettlewell's Works*, I. 663. 679. II. 582. *Archbishop Usher's Sermon before King James I.* p. 6. 7. 12. *Archbishop Hampton's Inquisition of the true Church, and those that revolt from it*. Dub. 1622.

The first part of the above-mentioned definition is generally acknowledged, viz.

I. That the Catholic Church is the one universal society of all christian people, incorporated by the new covenant in baptism, under Christ its supreme head.—For the scriptures expressly tell us, that the church is a body, whereof Christ is the head: “*He gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body,*” (Eph. i. 22, 23.) Into this society Christ commanded his disciples to admit “*all nations, baptising them,*” and “*to preach the gospel to every creature,*” (Matt. xxviii. 29.) The legal bond which unites the church, and renders its members one regular corporation, is the new covenant; and as God ratified his covenant with the Jews in the visible solemnity of circumcision,—so, in place of this, Christ introduced the sign of baptism to ratify the new covenant between God and us. For having by baptism entered into the service of the living God, we are directed and have promised to resist and renounce the enemies of our salvation, the world, the flesh, and the devil; that, by a sincere performance of the baptismal covenant, we may be entitled to the blessings and privileges of the holy gospel, viz. pardon of sin, and eternal life through Jesus Christ. And hence we are said “*to be baptised into the body,*” or church of Christ, (1 Cor. xii. 13.) because baptism, which is our admission into the christian covenant, is only, in other words, our admission into the christian church, which is the body of christian people confederated by the new covenant. But, until we are baptised, the new covenant is not struck between God and us, nor have we, ordinarily, any right or title to any of the blessings promised in it, even although we should perform all the duties it requires.—That which makes all christian people “*one body*” or society, is their being all united under *one* and

the same supreme *head* and governor. Accordingly St Paul tells us, that as there is but "*one body*," i. e. one church, so there is but "*one Lord*" or *supreme* Governor of that church, (Eph. iv. 4. 5.—Col. i. 18.—Eph. v. 23.)

II. The Catholic Church is the society of all christian people *distributed into particular churches*; which distribution is made for the convenience of divine worship.—At first, indeed, the whole Catholic Church was only a single congregation, but this in a short time increased so fast, that the members of it could no longer exercise the public worship of God in one place or assembly; and therefore they were distributed into several congregations, which, in scripture, are called by the name of churches, as being similar parts of the Catholic Church, even as every breath of air is called air, and every drop of water, water. These single congregations were not permitted to be independent of each other, but were all, at first, under the jurisdiction of their lawful governors, the apostles; and soon after, for the convenience of government, many of them (especially of those that were neighbouring) were collected into one body under one head or Bishop, who was the common guide of all the members of it, both clergy and laity. And these collections of several congregations, under their several Bishops or Governors, are also frequently called churches, and, in truth, are the only true form of a gospel church: For instance, the Church of Corinth contained in it several congregations, and therefore, though in the dedication of his epistle, the apostle calls it "*the Church of God which is at Corinth*," (1 Cor. 12.) yet in the epistle, he enjoins "*that their women keep silence in the churches*," (1 Cor. xiv. 34,) from whence it is evident,

that in that church there were *several churches or congregations*. And thus we also read of the Church of Jerusalem, of Antioch, of Ephesus, &c. which churches doubtless consisted of *several congregations* in and about those populous cities, which were all united in one body, under the inspection of one apostle or governor, whom we now call *Bishop*.

III. The Catholic Church is the one universal society of all christian people, distributed under lawful governors and pastors, into particular churches *holding communion with each other*.—What these *lawful governors and pastors* are, I shall fully explain hereafter. By particular churches holding communion with each other, I mean, acknowledging each other as parts of the same body, and admitting each other's members into actual communion with them in all their religious offices. The communion which particular churches are obliged to maintain, as they are similar parts of the Catholic Church, is, that they should not divide into separate churches, so as to exclude each other's members from communicating in their worship, whenever they have occasion to travel from one church to another. For, so long as there is no rupture between distant churches, no declared disowning of each other, no express refusal of any act of communion to each other's members, they may be truly said to maintain all *necessary* communion.

The Catholic Church is *one* by the communion of all its parts; and therefore they who break communion with any one part, must necessarily disunite themselves from the whole. For when two churches separate from one another, it must arise, either from the one requiring such terms of communion as are not catholic, or from the other refusing such as are. Now

that church, which requires *sinful* or *uncatholic* terms of communion, does hereby exclude not only one, but all parts of the Catholic Church from its communion, (because they are all equally obliged not to communicate with any church on such terms;) but, in doing so, separates itself from the communion of the Catholic Church. And so, on the other hand, that church, which refuses the communion of any other church upon lawful and catholic terms, does hereby separate itself from the communion of all parts of the Catholic Church. All those particular churches, therefore, into which the Catholic Church is distributed, must be in communion with each other, otherwise they are so far from being parts of the Catholic Church, that they are only so many schisms and divisions from it.—But it must be observed, that in a divided state of the church, there may be different communions, and yet both continue parts of the Catholic Church; as in the ancient excommunications concerning the observance of Easter; and in case of a precipitate sentence, when one Bishop takes upon him to excommunicate others for *little* or *no cause*, and against the consent of his brethren.

IV. Lastly, the communion which those particular churches, into which the Catholic Church is distributed, hold with each other is three fold, * viz. *In all the Essentials of christian Faith, and Worship, and Government.*

* It is granted on all hands that every part of divine truth is not in itself equally important, although all is sanctioned by the same authority. We ought carefully to distinguish between those ordinances and precepts which are of a local and temporary nature, and those which are of universal and perpetual obligation.—*Davies on Ch. Union*, p. 7. *Bramhall's Works*, p. 144.

I. In all the essentials of christian FAITH.—By the essentials of christian Faith*, I mean those doctrines, the belief of which is necessary to the very being of christianity; for as in all arts and sciences there are some first principles, upon which the whole scheme of their doctrines depend, and the denial of which, like removing the foundation of a building, dissolves and ruins the whole structure,—so in christianity, there are some principles so essential to it, that the removal of them shakes the whole scheme of it in pieces. Now the great *essential*, as St Paul tells us, is JESUS CHRIST, “*for other foundation can no man lay, than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ,*” (1 Cor. iii. 11.) and the apostle pronounces those apostates from christianity, who “*hold not the head,*” which is Jesus Christ, (Col. ii. 19.) But yet the bare belief of Jesus Christ, or of this proposition, that Jesus Christ came from God, is not all that is essential to the christian faith, which includes not only his mission from God, but also the end of his mission, viz. to be a mediator between God and man; and whatever proposition, *the mediatorship of Christ* necessarily and immediately implies, is a *fundamental* article of the christian faith, which no man can deny without innovating on the whole religion, and turning it into a quite different doctrine from true and real christianity.

For, if we believe *Jesus to be the Christ and Mediator*, we must believe all the holy scriptures as his word, and they contain every article. But it more especially implies his *incarnation, passion, resurrection, and*

* See Kettlewell's Works, I. p. 671. Sherlock's Vind. of his Defence of Bishop Stillingfleet's Unreasonableness of Separation, 1682, p. 250. Field of the Church, p. 77

other great articles of the *Creed*, which must be expressly acknowledged by every one who rightly understands it. And accordingly, in the various repetitions of this grand article in the scriptures, one or other of these is oftentimes added, and given as the instance of it, (1 John iv. 15. &c. v. 1.) “ *Believing Jesus Christ to be the Son of God, you may have life through his name,*” says St John, showing the necessity of this main foundation, (John xx. 31.) But St Paul, speaking of this grand article, says, “ *I determined to know nothing among you, but Jesus Christ, and him crucified ;*” setting forth the knowledge of Christ, in the knowledge of his *passion*, (1 Cor. ii. 2.) And, “ *if thou confess the Lord Jesus, and believe God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved ;*” exemplifying the saving knowledge of Jesus, in the belief of his *resurrection*, (Rom. x. 9.) “ *And when he commanded us to preach him,*” says St Peter, “ *he commanded us to preach and testify that it is he who is ordained of God, to be the judge both of quick and dead ;*” illustrating the preaching Christ, by preaching the *future judgment*, (Acts x. 42.) “ *Every spirit that confesseth Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God ; and every spirit that confesseth it not is antichrist, and not of God,*” says St John, explaining the confession of Christ by the confession of his *incarnation*, (1 John iv. 2. 3.) And speaking of the *record*, or witness, which God has given to the christian doctrine, he thus declares what was attested by him: “ *This is the record, that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life ;*” setting forth the christian religion, and the saving faith, by the belief of the *life everlasting*, (1 John v. 10. 11. 12.) And as for the necessity of the belief

of the *Holy Ghost*, and of our dependence on him, to make a man a christian, this has been sufficiently expressed by our Saviour, by ordering our very baptism, which initiates us into christianity, to be "*into his name*," (Matt. xxviii. 19.)

All the remaining articles in the creed (adds Mr Kettlewell,) are only necessary appendages of this grand and comprehensive article, of Jesus being the Christ and Saviour. And all these points, together with others in the creed, concerning *God the Father*, and the *Holy Ghost*, are *essential to the faith*. For they are the very ground and foundation of our subjection to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost (the parties with whom we contract in the christian covenant,) of all our adoration, trust, and submission to the blessed Jesus; of our worshipping and serving God by him; of all that holiness which is the great design of all religion; on all which accounts they are necessary and essential articles of christian faith, and properly called *fundamentals**.

In short, the believing *Jesus to be the Christ*, is, in more explicit words, to believe the *Apostles' Creed*, since in that summary of our faith all the above-mentioned articles are recited. It has always been the form of faith at baptism, and was held by the ancient fathers, as the "canon," the "sum," the "perfect sum of faith; that token which was sufficient to shew those who preached Christ according to the doctrine of the apostles, and distinguish believers from infidels."

* See *Sherlock's Defence*, p. 278. where he proves that Salvation by Christ is a fundamental doctrine, or nothing is fundamental in the christian faith; and yet the doctrine of Salvation by Christ is necessarily founded on the belief of the Holy Trinity, each sacred person being peculiarly concerned in the economy of man's salvation.

Now, whosoever believes not, or at least denies any ~~essential part of the christian faith~~, is not a christian ; and that, not only because he wants a part of that faith which denominates men christians, but also by disbelieving that part, he does, by necessary consequence, overthrow the whole of christianity. And hence it is that *heretics*, who are such as obstinately deny any fundamental article of christianity, are in scripture ranked with heathens and infidels ; for all true christians are required to “ *shun and avoid them as unclean persons,*” (Rom. xvi. 17.) and the governors of the church are required to anathematize and exclude them from all christian communion, (Gal. i. 8.) to “ *reject them,*” (Tit. iii. 10.) and “ *withdraw themselves from them,*” (1 Tim. vi. 5.) that is, to treat them as *heathens and infidels*, who have no right or title to christian communion : and if heretical persons are to be treated in this manner, then much more so are heretical churches, and consequently, as such, must be unqualified for christian communion *. Therefore, a common agreement in all the essentials of christian faith, which is the opposite of heresy, is necessarily included in catholic communion ; accordingly, the scripture frequently urges all christian people to this common agreement, as a most essential part of their communion with each other, for they are required to “ *mind, or think the same thing, to be joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment,*” (Phil. ii. 2.—2 Cor. xiii. 11.—Phil. i. 27.—1 Cor. i. 10.), “ *to hold fast the form of sound words,*” (2 Tim. i. 13.—Phil. i. 27.) to “ *keep that which is committed to us,*” (1 Tim. vi. 20.) which is “ *that one form of doctrine which was*

* See Kettlewell's Works, II. 590.

delivered to us," (Rom. vi. 17.) the meaning of which is, not to oblige us to be of one mind and judgment in *all* points of religion; for that is no more in our power than to be all of one stature; but that we should unanimously consent in all the *essentials* or *fundamentals* of christian faith. So long then as the essential doctrines of the gospel are secured between neighbouring churches, no corrupt doctrines on either side can warrant a breach of communion between them. It is true, if the erring church *impose the belief* of its errors as a condition of its communion, (which few churches do, but upon their own immediate members, excepting the Church of Rome;) no church or christian, that believes them to be errors, can lawfully communicate with it, be those errors ever so small or inconsiderable: Not that in themselves they are a sufficient cause of separation, but because they who do not believe them, cannot profess they do without telling a lie, which is a condition that is simply unlawful.

As, for instance, the Lutheran doctrine of consubstantiation is as false, though not as absurd, as the Popish doctrine of transubstantiation; but yet we may lawfully communicate with the Lutheran church, because it does not *oblige* us to profess our belief of consubstantiation. If the errors be such as are not merely speculative, but corrupt their worship, then we must not join in those acts of worship that are corrupted by them, as the Popish mass is by the doctrine of transubstantiation.

So that there is no error can separate any church or christian from the catholic communion of FAITH, but only heresy, which is a perverse renunciation of some *essential* part or fundamental article of that faith.

II. The particular churches, into which the Catholic Church is divided, hold communion with each other in all the essentials of christian WORSHIP.—By these I mean the invocation of the one eternal God through the one Mediator Jesus Christ,—and the participation of the two sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper. Hence the apostle tells us, that as there is but "*one*" common "*faith*," in which all true christians communicate with each other; so, there is but "*one Lord*," (Eph. iv. 5.) to address to, and "*one Mediator between God and man*," for us to address by, (Tim. ii. 5.) and therefore, to address this one God by this one Mediator, is an essential part of christian worship.—The same apostle tells us, that there is but "*one baptism*," (Eph. iv. 4.) and the "*cup of blessing*," and "*bread, of which we are all partakers*," (1 Cor. x. 16. 17.) and therefore to participate in these sacraments, must also be *essential* to christian worship. So that all those particular churches, that admit each other's members upon lawful terms, to communicate with them in worshipping this one God through this one Mediator, and in this one baptism, and one eucharistical bread and cup, are *so far* in communion with the Church Catholic; for, in these acts of worship consists the principal part of christian communion. On the contrary, that church which refuses either to admit other churches to communicate with her in these acts of worship, or to communicate with them upon lawful terms, doth so far separate itself from the christian communion. I say, upon lawful terms, because if it either *require unlawful* or *refuse lawful* ones, it utterly excludes all other churches from its communion. If, on the one hand, it has corrupted its worship with any *unlawful* intermixtures, so that it is impossible to par-

participate in the one, without partaking of the other,—if we cannot pray with her to the one God by the one Mediator, without praying to creatures too, or praying by other mediators also, or in a language we do not understand,—if we cannot participate in her baptism, without partaking of some sinful rites of baptism,—if we cannot be admitted to receive the Lord's supper with her, without receiving it by halves, or being obliged to pay divine homage to its elements,—in this case, I say, all christians and christian churches are utterly excluded by her, from communicating with her in the essentials of christian worship. And so, on the other hand, if a church *forbid* its members to communicate occasionally with any other church upon *lawful* terms, in so doing, it divides itself from the communion of the Catholic Church; and although that church it refuses to communicate with, *should*, through the neglect of its discipline, tolerate many corrupt and scandalous members; though it should require the observation of a great many indifferent rites and ceremonies;—yet, so long as the essentials of its worship are preserved pure and entire without any *sinful* intermixtures, to refuse to communicate with it, is to separate from the communion of the Catholic Church. For, for the same reason that any church refuses to communicate with this church, it must refuse to communicate with all other churches in the world; because we cannot to this day, nor ever could communicate with any church in the world, in which there were not some intermixtures of bad men with good, and some indifferent modes and ceremonies of worship.

III. The two principal marks of the Catholic Church have now been explained, viz. the essentials of the

apostolic Faith and Worship. I proceed now to the third mark, by which the true Catholic Church is distinguished from the congregations of schismatics, as by the two former it is distinguished from those of heretics.—I mean the ESSENTIALS of christian GOVERNMENT, in which all true Catholic Churches communicate with one another, and, as St Luke expresses it, “*continue stedfastly in the apostles’ Fellowship.*” The particular modes and circumstances of government and discipline, I admit, are not determined by divine institution, but left for the most part free to the prudent disposal of the governors of particular churches; yet, there is a *standing form* of government and discipline in the church, instituted by our Saviour himself, which, as I shall prove hereafter, is this, that there should be an EPISCOPACY, or order of men, authorised in a continued succession from the apostles (who were authorised by himself,) to oversee and govern all those particular churches into which the Catholic Church should be hereafter distributed; to ordain inferior ministers to teach, and instruct, and administer the holy offices to particular congregations; and having ordained them, to guide and direct them in the discharge of their functions; to prescribe the particular rules of external order and decency to the people of the respective churches committed to their charge; to confirm the weak, admonish the disorderly, and correct the obstinate, by excluding them from the communion of the Church of Christ. These things therefore, being all of divine institution, are the essentials of christian government and discipline, in which all churches are obliged to communicate with each other. And this being the *standing government and discipline* of the Catholic Church, no particular church

can refuse to communicate in it, without dividing itself from the communion of the Catholic Church ; I say, *refuse* to communicate in it, because it is possible for a church to be without this government, which yet neither refuses it, nor the communion of any other church for the sake of it. A church may be debarred of it by unavoidable necessities, and against its consent, and, under this circumstance, I can by no means think such a church to be separated from the Catholic Church ; it is, indeed, an *imperfect* and *defective* part of it. Yet it is a plain case, that if it *reject* the Episcopacy and separate from the communion of it, it thereby wholly divides itself from the Catholic Church. For whether Episcopacy be of divine institution or not, this is matter of fact granted on all hands, that for 1400 years at least, all those churches into which the Catholic Church has been distributed, have been subject to the episcopal government and discipline ; therefore, they who now separate from the episcopal communion as such, must, in so doing, separate themselves from the communion of all churches for 1400 years together : And then either all those churches must be out of the communion of the Catholic Church, and consequently, during all that time there must have been no such thing as a visible Catholic Church upon earth ; or else those communities of christians which separate from all those churches, must be schisms and separations from the Catholic Church.

These three marks then, the *Essentials* of FAITH, WORSHIP, and GOVERNMENT, are the characteristic notes, by which the pure Catholic Church is everywhere distinguished from the congregations of heretics and schismatics. The primitive christians "*con-*

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ber to fifteen ; the generality of Dissenters, on the other hand, limit them to two, and consider Church Government merely as expedient, but not at all necessary. Even the Presbyterians, who formerly contended so vehemently for the *Divinum Jus* of Presbyterian government, have now abandoned it, and maintain, that “with respect to a particular form of Church Government, Christ appears to have left this point undetermined, and has only required, by express law, that all things should be done decently and in order*.” Some even go so far as to affirm, that a man may be a good catholic christian, without uniting himself to church governors of any denomination. But the danger and absurdity of this notion, and the necessity of “*continuing stedfastly in the apostles’ fellowship,*” and of avoiding the sin of schism, I shall fully demonstrate hereafter.

In the mean time, I shall now proceed to prove, that the Episcopal form of Church Government was instituted by our Saviour and his apostles, as a distinguishing mark of the true church,—that it was to correspond with the nature of the faith it was intended to preserve, that of being the “same yesterday, to-day, and for ever,”—and consequently, that all professed christians are bound to receive “that particular form, and cannot adopt any other without incurring the charge of disobedience to Christ as King of Zion, and consequently incurring his wrath.”—But before I proceed, I must remind the reader, that the question is not what form of Church Government appears to this or that lover of novelty, the most ex-

* *The Nature of the Presbyterian Form of Church Government*, by B. M'Dowel, D. D. Dub. 1808, p. 54. 11.

pedient, but what was the government established by Christ and his apostles. This is confessed by a late violent opponent of Episcopacy: If it can be proved says Dr Mitchell (*Presbyterian Letters*, p. 28, 1809,) that Episcopacy is of divine institution, our rejection of it would be *absolutely without excuse*, although we should never discover that it is good for any thing. Jesus Christ had an unquestionable title to prescribe the form of government, without instructing *us* in the reasons on which he acted; and we may well believe, that what he prescribed, is the fittest for us and the best.—But from whence are we to derive our information with respect to this important point? Undoubtedly from the scriptures; and no man (to use Dr M.'s words) shall ever persuade me to believe, that what is not to be found in scripture as a condition of salvation, is one of the terms of acceptance with God, through Jesus Christ. “Instead then of forming a system agreeable to our views of expediency, and then searching for passages of scripture to support it, let us begin by ascertaining particular facts in regard to the apostolic churches.” Haldane's *Social Worship*, Edin. p. 100.

CHAP II.

THE THREE DISTINCT ORDERS OF BISHOPS, PRESBYTERS
OR PRIESTS, AND DEACONS, PROVED FROM THE SCRIP-
TURES AND PRIMITIVE FATHERS.

I CONFESS, indeed, that the orders which we *now* call Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, are not distinguished in scripture by these *names*. The orders themselves are plainly distinguished in scripture, but each name is not particularly and constantly applied to a distinct order. For those whom we now call Bishops, were then distinguished by the name of apostles; and the names of Bishop and Presbyter are there promiscuously used for that order, which we now call Presbyter or Priest. It is not to be wondered (says King Charles I. in his *Second Answer to the Presbyterian Ministers*,) if it should happen, that, in the New Testament, the word *Episcopus* or Bishop is usually applied to Presbyters, who were indeed overseers of the flock, rather than unto church governors, who had then a title of greater eminency, viz. Apostles. But when the government of churches came into the hands of their successors, the names were, by common usage, very soon appropriated,—that of Bishop to the governor of a diocese,—that of Presbyter to the ordinary minister or priest.—This is a distinction I would desire the reader carefully to observe, because, upon the community of the names Bishop and Presbyter in scripture, depend most of the arguments

of Presbyterians. But it is not the distinction of *names*, but of the *office* for which we contend. I shall, therefore, briefly prove from scripture, that there were three orders instituted by Christ and his apostles,—and then shew, from ancient authors, that the names, *Bishops, Priests, and Deacons* have, from the apostles' time, been constantly appropriated to these orders*.

We read, (Matt. iii. 5. 6.) that John the baptist had a great multitude of disciples; but Jesus made and baptised more disciples than John. “*And of them he chose twelve, whom he named apostles, and sent them to preach the kingdom of God,*” (Luke vi. 13.) After these “*the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come,*” (Luke x. 1.) So that during our Saviour's abode here on earth, there were three orders of ministers in the church,—first, Christ himself, “*the shepherd and Bishop of souls, an high priest called of God,*”—then the twelve apostles,—and after them the seventy disciples, who are so distin-

* The writers on this head are very numerous, but I would particularly recommend *Dr Brett's Account of Church Government*, 2d edit. 1710, and his *Divine Right of Episcopacy*, 1718. *Burscough on Church Government*, 1692, a book which well deserves to be better known, says *Bishop Hare*. *Bishop Parker on do.* 1683. *Brief Account of Church Government*, (with Remarks on *Jus Div. Min. Evang. Blondelli Apologia*, and *Stillingfleet's Irenicum*,) strongly recommended by *Mr Hoadly* in his excellent *Defence of Episcopal Ordination*, 1709. But above all consult *Dr Drury's Answer to Boyse*, and his *Vind. of do.* Dub. 1709. and his *Divine Right of Episcopacy*, (in answer to *Boyse's Clear Account of Episcopacy*,) Dub. 1714.—I beg leave to guard the reader against adopting *Dr Hammond's* System of defending Episcopacy, as expressed in his Notes on the New Testament. His odd notions, as *Mr Hoadly* observes, are hardly followed by one Episcopal divine of any consideration.

guished from one another, that it implies a distinction in their office; they are mentioned apart by different names, and sent forth at different times. And that the apostles were superior to the seventy, is farther evident, not only from our Saviour's particular intercession for the twelve, and the care he took in instructing them more than the rest of his followers, but from hence also, that the successors of the apostles were chosen out of the seventy. Now, if the apostles knew that the seventy were equal in power and authority with themselves, to what purpose were they so solicitous to fill up their number from among the disciples? To what purpose was Matthias chosen in the place of Judas, if he could receive no more power than he possessed in his former commission? From all which it is evident, I think, to a demonstration, that the twelve apostles received, in their commission from Christ, some ecclesiastical power which the seventy did not.—In this establishment of three orders in his church, our Saviour adhered as near as possible to the form in use among the Jews, who had their High-priest, Priests, and Levites.

It is very evident from the holy scriptures, that, during his residence on earth, our Saviour executed the whole Episcopal authority in his own person, and gave no power to any to *ordain*, or *send*, or *commission* others till after his resurrection. During all that time, the apostles were in the situation of Presbyters only; and although superior to the seventy, and possessing authority "*to preach*" and "*baptise*," yet they had no authority to commission or send *others* to perform the same functions. For, as Christ alone had authority to send *them*, so he alone had authority to send other seventy also. And of this he informs them at the

time of his sending them forth ; “ *The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few. Pray ye therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.*” Now these words being spoken both to the twelve and to the seventy, at the very time he gave them their commission to preach, was a plain intimation to them, that if they found more assistance necessary, they should not take upon them to commission others, but desire him, who was the Lord of the harvest, to send a further supply of labourers. An evident argument, that whosoever has authority to minister the word and sacraments, has not therefore authority to ordain and commission others to that office ; since Christ, when he gave his apostles a commission to do the former, so plainly restrained them from performing the latter, and required them to apply to himself on that occasion, as to the Lord of the harvest.

Thus we have clearly discovered three orders of ministers in the christian church, while Christ was upon earth : First, Christ himself, the head or Bishop ; secondly, the twelve apostles, answering to the Priests, or second order ; and lastly, the seventy disciples, answering to the Deacons. But then it is to be observed, that when our Saviour settled this economy in his church, he had confined it to the Jewish nation, for when he sent his disciples forth to preach, he charged them, saying, “ *go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into the city of the Samaritans enter ye not, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,*” (Matt. x. 5.) And being raised up by God to be “ *a prophet like unto Moses,*” (Deut. xviii. 15. Acts vii. 37.) he thought proper, while he saw it convenient to have his church confined to the Jewish country, to adhere strictly to

(Acts xx. 28.) Thus, after the resurrection as well as before, we find three orders of ministers in the church; first, the *Apostles*, who were chief governors; next, the *Presbyters* (then called Bishops;) and lastly, the *Deacons*, answering to the lower order of the seventy disciples.

The APOSTLES, therefore, were the FIRST BISHOPS (as the word is now used,) of the christian church, and governed it under our Saviour, who gave them their commission for that purpose. But, although the authority bestowed on them by our Lord was common to them all, so that they were *each* of them Bishops and governors of the *whole* Catholic Church, and at liberty to exercise their Episcopal power in *any* part of it; yet they soon found it necessary to limit the universality of their power, as to the executive part, that one might not interfere with another; and this in all probability they did, by the direction of the Holy Spirit, who is "*the God of order, not of confusion, in all the churches of the saints.*" The first division we find made by them, is mentioned by St Paul, who says that some of the apostles were appointed by mutual agreement (and not by any command of St Peter,) to take charge of the Gentiles and others of the Jews, (Gal. ii. 9.) And having thus settled, by mutual agreement, that "*James, Cephas (or Peter,) and John,*" should undertake the government and inspection of the Jewish, and St Paul and Barnabas of the Gentile christians, they then proceeded to make a further limitation, and gave to each apostle his particular district or diocese.

Thus they appointed ST JAMES, the BISHOP of JERUSALEM; and whether he was one of the twelve or not, this is beyond dispute, that he was by compact

authority to rule and govern the church in his stead, and ordain and send others, as he had sent them, for a perpetual succession to the end of the world.—“*As my Father,*” says he, “*hath sent me, so send I you,*” (John xx. 21.) and when he had said this, “*he breathed on them, saying, receive ye the Holy Ghost.*” But it was not until they had received it in a visible manner on the day of Pentecost that they began to govern the Church by those rules they had received from Christ: it was then, and not before, that they offered to ordain others, according to their second commission from their master, and that with reference both to *Presbyters* and *Deacons*. Thus, they ordained Deacons “*to take care of the widows and the poor in the daily administration,*” (Acts vi.) These had also authority (as they now have with their Bishop’s licence,) to preach and to baptise; for Philip, who was one of them, (Acts viii. 5.) went to preach at Samaria, where he made many converts, and baptised them; but his authority extended no farther, for, possessing no power to lay on hands, either to confirm those whom he had baptised, or ordain ministers among them, he was under the necessity of informing the apostles of what he had done, who sent Peter and John, two of their own order, to perform those things which Philip, a mere Deacon, had no authority to do. The apostles “*ordained also Elders* (which word ought to have been rendered *Presbyters*, or *Priests*,) *in every city,*” (Acts xiv. 23.) These *Presbyters* are likewise called *Bishops*, for so St Paul styled the *Presbyters* of Ephesus, when he sent for them to attend his Episcopal or apostolic Visitation at Miletus, saying, “*take heed to yourselves and to the whole flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you (Bishops or) overseers,*”

tioned in St John's gospel (xix. 25.) who was placed by the apostles, who were then alive, with the same authority as his predecessor. He remained Bishop till his death. This is an important fact, as it ascertains the opinion which the companions of our Lord entertained of the necessity of regular succession, and of the use of Episcopal authority. After Simeon, there succeeded thirteen Bishops of the Jewish race (before the final excision of the Jews by Adrian,) whose names Eusebius has inserted into his history from the ancient monuments of the church.

It is objected by some (not at all to the credit of christianity,) that the Church of Jerusalem was confined to a single congregation. But, it is utterly impossible, that the many thousands from time to time converted in Jerusalem alone, and the daily increase of them *, could worship God in one and the same place together. Hence the necessity of their being divided into several congregations, though still but the one Church of Jerusalem, "*a persecution being raised against the church.*" From whence it follows, that the Bishop of Jerusalem must have had many congregations of christians under his superintendence at a time, and consequently many Presbyters officiating under him for the discharge of ministerial purposes, (Acts xxi. 18.) But yet it does not at all affect the point in debate, whether there were more congregations there than one, or not; for since there were many Presbyters there, and one apostle or Bishop, their constant president, there is an end of Presbyterian equality in the time of the apostles. The

* Acts i. 15.—ii. 41. 47.—iv. 4. and vi. 7. See *Maurice's Def. of Dioc. Episc. against Clarkson*, p. 9. 3d ed. 1717.

state of the question relating to Episcopacy being, as I shall hereafter shew, not concerning a diocese,—but whether the apostles left the plenitude of their ecclesiastical power to some single persons, who were called apostles and afterwards Bishops,—or whether they gave it in commission to every Presbyter they ordained.

As St James had Jerusalem and the adjacent country for his diocese, so the other apostles (though each had a general authority in, and concern for the whole church,) had certain places for their districts also, and exercised a particular authority over the churches which they had planted. Thus JAMES, PETER, and JOHN had, in a more particular manner, the care of the Jewish, and PAUL and BARNABAS of the Gentile christians, (1 Pet. i. 1.—James i. 1.—Gal. ii. 9.) The apostle BARNABAS seems, upon his separation from St Paul, to have settled himself in Cyprus his native country, (Acts xv. 39.) St PAUL had the government of many churches which he founded, and was their proper Bishop himself, (and even, at the same time, officiated as pastor of some congregations,) till he found it necessary to commit the care of them to others. That he exercised this authority over Presbyters, is manifest from his sending for the Presbyters of Ephesus to come to him at Miletus, (Acts xx. 17.) and giving them a charge to perform their duties faithfully, as our Bishops do in their visitations. And in another place, (Acts xv. 36.) he visits the churches wherein he had ordained Presbyters before; *“Let us return,”* says he to Barnabas, *“and visit our brethren in all cities, where we preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do.”* And again, *“Besides those things which are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.”*

And that he judged himself to have no superior or equal in spiritual matters, within his own district, "*the measure of the rule which God had given to him,*" (2 Cor. x. 13.) is no less manifest from what he writes to the Corinthians, (1 Cor. iv. 15.) where he says, "*Although ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet ye have not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me,*" (1 Cor. iv. 19.) and "*Am I not an apostle? if I am not so to others, yet doubtless I am to you,*" (1 Cor. iv. 16.)

Thus, for some time, the Episcopal authority was exercised exclusively by the apostles themselves; but, because the number of the faithful daily increased, they proceeded to communicate all the branches of the apostolic office to other persons, who should supply their places at their decease, and continue the succession to the end of the world.

That the apostolic office, in its ordinary and essential parts, was to continue for ever in the church, is evident from the commission given to the apostles by our Saviour after his resurrection. For having chosen the eleven out of above five hundred, to whom he appeared at that time, he spoke to them saying, "*All power is given to me in heaven and earth, go ye therefore and make proselytes of all nations, baptising them, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world, amen.*" Such, as Dr Graves*

* *Sermon at the consecration of Bishop Warburton (of Limerick,) in St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, by Dr Graves, S. F. T. C. D. 1806, p. 8. See also Bishop Skinner's reasoning on this text, Primitive Truth, p. 154.*

observes, was the solemn delegation of divine authority to the apostles, commanding them to form and establish the visible Church of Christ, and enabling them to convey to their successors in its administration and government, all such powers as might be necessary to extend and sustain it, even to the end of the world.—And that this promise was made to the office or order with which he had invested them, and not to their persons, is evident,—because otherwise it must have failed at their deaths, which happened within less than an hundred years after that time; and therefore Christ would not have fulfilled his promise to them, to be “*with them always even to the end of the world.*” Consequently this promise must necessarily extend to others, who should succeed them in this office, and therefore implies a power in them to elect and set apart others for the discharge of it.—And therefore, that the apostolate might be successive and perpetual, Christ gave them a power of ordination, that, by imposing hands on others, they might impart that power which they received from Christ. Bishop Taylor on *Episcopacy*, p. 13*.

But it is objected, “that the nature of the office of the apostles was such, as to require extraordinary and miraculous endowments for the discharge of many parts of it; and it is impossible that they can have any successors in those services, who are not impowered for the execution of them, as the apostles themselves were,” Doddridge’s *Course of Lectures*, Vol. 2. p. 343. But in answer to this, let us consider what it is properly to be an apostle, or wherein the office purely

* See also *Grotius Com.* in Matt. xxviii. 20. *Jus Div. Min. Evang.* part 1. p. 26. 27. *Daubeny’s Guide*, p. xviii.

apostolic consisted. For in the apostles, (Bishop Taylor, *On Episcopacy*, p. 13*.) there was something *extraordinary*; something *ordinary*. Whatever was *extraordinary*, as immediate mission, infallibility, tongues, and a power of working miracles, was designed only for the first plantation and propagation of the gospel, and therefore not necessary to the perpetual government of the church, for then the church would necessarily fail when these extraordinary privileges ceased. Besides, these extraordinary qualifications did not peculiarly belong to the apostolic office, but were possessed by other ministers who were not apostolic, (1 Cor. vi. 12. 13. Acts vi. 8. viii. 7.) by Presbyters as well as Deacons. Yet when these privileges ceased, the order and mission of Presbyters did not cease likewise, but still remained, and ought to remain to the end of the world. And therefore these privileges could not possibly be esteemed any parts of the apostolic office, being only extraordinary gifts bestowed on them, the better to enable them to perform that office.

But there are other things which are *ordinary* and *essential* to the apostolic office, without which they could not have been apostles, and which are necessary to the government of Christ's Church till his second coming. This is the power which I affirm to be *permanent* and *perpetual*, and by this the apostles were distinguished from all subordinate officers in the

* See also *Bishop Beveridge's Sermons*, Vol. 1. p. 9. *Bishop Bilson's Perpetual Government of Christ's Church*, Lond. 1593. in his *Address to the reader*. *Bishop Skinner's Prim. Truth and Order*, 1803, p. 190. *Burscough on Church Government*, p. 40, 78. *Dr Barrow's* mistakes on this head (in his *Treat. against the Pope's Supremacy*, quoted against Episcopacy by *Doddridge, Lectures II. p. 348.*) are ably confuted in *Drury's 2d Ans. to Boyse*, p. 80.

church. Now therefore, that which particularly distinguished them, and which was the true characteristic of an apostle, was the *supreme* spiritual power and *authority*, and a power of *ordaining*, *i. e.* of transmitting this authority to others, according to the commandment of Christ. And therefore to make the apostolic office temporary, is to defeat our Saviour's promise, which could not be accomplished, if those offices had not remained in the church, without which it could neither *be* nor *continue*. Whatever belonged to them as apostles or officers of Christ, was to be derived from them to other officers of the church for ever, unless we can suppose that men may be christians without having the seal of christianity; that men may become priests and ambassadors for God, without being sent by such men as he gave power and commission to.

Having thus proved that the office of the apostles was to continue to the end of the world, it remains to be considered what persons they appointed as their successors; whether, as Episcopalians affirm, they constituted single persons with the whole ecclesiastical power, and others with part only,—or whether, as Presbyterians would persuade us, they bequeathed it equally to the whole body of Presbyters, without any distinction or superiority of one over another.—Now, in answer to this, I assert,—1. That the apostles could not, by virtue of their commission, bestow this authority equally among all Presbyters; because our Saviour himself had not done it, but had instituted another form of government, and by his example, taught them to continue it for ever after his ascension.—2. That the apostles did actually invest the whole of their power, not in every Presbyter, but in

some single persons of every church; and appointed them to rule and govern with the same authority as they had done, and ordain others for the same purpose to all succeeding generations. These single persons we now call Bishops, and, as I shall prove, are the *immediate successors* of the first apostles.

But before I proceed, I must remind the reader that the *extent* of a *diocese* is *not essential* to the office of a Bishop; and when I say that the Bishops succeed the apostles, I do not mean that it is necessary that they should succeed to this or that particular district, but in their power and jurisdiction. When therefore, Presbyterians and Independents upon all occasions make so much noise about *diocesan Bishops* and *diocesan Churches**, it is only to darken the cause; for the question is not about a diocese, but whether the apostles left the plenitude of their ecclesiastical power to some single persons, who were called apostles

* Thus Doddridge argues against the *divine* right of *diocesan* Episcopacy, and never states the question in any other form; and Dr Mitchell brings forward Bishop Skinner asserting, that "no scheme of Ecclesiastical polity can conduct christians to salvation but *diocesan* Episcopacy," p. 185. Certainly, (observes Mr Drury,) they cannot be in earnest, or think that they dispute against the *order* of Bishops, when they thus violently set on their *dioceses* only: And they cannot but acknowledge, that both the apostles and seventy disciples had a spiritual power and jurisdiction distinct from each other, given by Christ at their ordination, before they had either *parishes* or *dioceses* as their peculiar charge. No divine of our church ever argued for the *positive* divine right of diocesan Episcopacy; nay, Dr Maurice, in his *Defence of Diocesan Episcopacy* against D. Clarkson, does not pretend to it. He only complies with his adversary so far as to let him see how groundless his supposition of *congregational Episcopacy* is, since, should it be conceded to him, it would do our cause no injury. See *Maurice*, p. 5 6. 7.

and afterwards Bishops, or whether they gave it in commission to every Presbyter they ordained. If they left it to some single persons, as it is evident they did, it signifies nothing to the question in debate whether they exercised that power in a large diocese or in a single congregation, for this is wholly owing to compact and agreement; which gives a very easy and natural solution of that question, why St Paul "*besought Timothy to abide at Ephesus*," (1 Tim. i. 3.) because, as he was a Bishop of the Church of Christ, the exercise of his authority could not be limited to Ephesus or any particular district, unless he had consented to it himself; and therefore St Paul did not command, but "*beseech*" him to abide at Ephesus, and there exercise his apostolic jurisdiction. In short, it is not the being pastor of *one* or of *many* congregations that constitutes a Bishop, but the *order*.

It has already been intimated, that as the apostles were superior in authority to the Presbyters* whom

* That the apostles were *superior* both in order and in office to Presbyters, no unprejudiced person, I think, can deny. Dr M'Dowel indeed, in his late pamphlet in defence of Presbyterianism, seems to assert the contrary, where he says, "that the apostles themselves, as well as those whom they ordained to the ministry, were Presbyters, and acknowledged themselves such;" and, in confirmation of this, quotes the text "*The Presbyters which are among you, I Peter exhort, who am also a Presbyter*," (Pet. v. 1.)—If the Dr means by this, that the apostles were not superior to Presbyters; or, in other words, that every Presbyter was an apostle, he is greatly mistaken. For although a superior order frequently includes all its relative inferior orders, yet in no case does the contrary take place. Thus, with respect to University degrees, it is well known, that the degree of Doctor or Master in any faculty presupposes and includes the degree of Bachelor in the same faculty,—and so it is in the ministerial orders; the apostolic, or (as it is now called) the Episcopal order including the order of Presbyter, and also of Deacon,

they ordained,—so they selected some of those Presbyters to whom they communicated all the branches of the apostolic office, in order that they might supply their places at their decease, and continue the succession to the end of the world. This argument, that

but not *à contra*. No conclusive proof then can be drawn from the above-mentioned text, of the equality of the order of Presbyters with the apostolic or Episcopal order, but only that the word *Presbyter* was sometimes applied to that order, by way of humility or condescension ; and this, I think, will appear to have been the motive of Peter's styling himself Συμπρεσβυτης.

But farther, to shew the weakness of the inference drawn by Presbyterians and others from the above-mentioned text, I desire it may be considered, that if St Peter's application to himself of the word *Presbyter*, be a sufficient argument to prove that all Presbyters possess apostolic power, and consequently the power of ordination,—then it must be allowed, that St Paul's applying to himself, (and that more than once, see Eph. iii. 7.—Col. i. 23.—nay even to Christ, Rom. xv. 8.) the word *Deacon* is as sufficient an argument that all Deacons are invested with apostolic power, and so with the power of ordination. And thus it is evident, that their own method of inference will force them much farther than they are willing to proceed, according to their own principles. Similar to this Presbyterian argument is that one, (so repeatedly answered,) by which it is attempted to be proved, that "Bishops and Presbyters are in scripture the very same, and not a distinct order or office in the christian church," (Phil. i. 1.—Tit. i. 5. 7.—Acts xx. 27. 28.) *Towgood's Third Letter*, p. 58. *Palmer's P. Dissenter's Catech.* p. 30. Monaghan, 1791.—This argument has also been taken up by the Methodists, who profess such regard and esteem for the Episcopal Church !! See *Benson's Answer to Russel*, p. 62. 1793, and *A. Scott on the Lord's Supper, and on the propriety of administering it among the Methodists*, Belfast, 1803. "The terms Bishop and Elder," says Mr Scott, "are promiscuously used in scripture, to signify persons in the same office," p. 15.—*Answer*. I have already granted, that Presbyters are called Bishops in several places of the New Testament. But then it must be acknowledged, that the Presbyters mentioned in those places were subordinate to other pastors ; and, consequently, a con-

the apostolic office was really *continued*, entirely overthrows the conceit of its being personal and temporary, and this I shall prove by several instances from scripture. And first, those of Matthias, Barnabas, and Paul.

The apostleship of Matthias is recorded in Acts i. where we read, that immediately after our Saviour's ascension, the apostles and disciples (before the Holy Ghost had come upon them and empowered them with miraculous and extraordinary gifts,) met together to elect one into the place of the apostle Judas. The necessity of this is urged with great earnestness by Peter, who tells them, it could not be neglected, "*it must be done**;" and for this reason he calls it a part of the ministry and apostleship †, that is, such a part of the

tinuance of their office supposes a continuance of such superiors to the end of the world.

Again, it is affirmed by Dr M'Dowel, that "the Presbyterian doctrine of the sameness of order and equality of power among the ministers of Christ, is fully established by Christ himself, in the following words: "*The princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great, exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister.—and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant, even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many,*" (Matt. xx. 25.) But I have already proved, that, in fact, a distinction of orders in the church was established by Christ, and exercised by his apostles; and therefore this single text is entirely insufficient to overthrow what appears to be the whole tenor of the New Testament, with respect to the government of the church. The apostles indeed, were all equal, and possessed no superiority of order or authority over one another, and it is these our Saviour addresses not to exercise superiority over each other, "*for there was a strife among them, which of them should be greatest.*" See a farther explanation of this text in *Bishop Potter on Church Government*, p. 57. 2d edit. 1711.

* Δε.

† Κληροι της διακονιης και αποστολης.

church's patrimony as was not to be alienated or suffered to go to decay ; and likewise mentions, that it is written in the book of Psalms, "*Let his habitation be desolate, and his bishopric let another take.*" From all this it is evident, that the apostolic office was not personal, for then Judas could have had no successor ; but since Matthias did succeed Judas in his apostleship, it is no absurdity to say, that the rest of the apostles may have successors as well as he. And indeed it appears pretty evident to me, that the apostles and 120 disciples, who were met together on this occasion, never so much as doubted of the *continuance* of the *apostolic office* in the church for ever. For if they had not been fully persuaded of our Saviour's intention in this particular, they ought not to have put it to lot, whether Barnabas or Matthias should succeed Judas ; but they should have first put it to lot, and sought for some clear direction from the Lord, whether Judas *should* or *could* have a *successor* at all.

The apostleship of Barnabas, who was one of the seventy, is also evident, for he had a formal ordination to the apostolic office, at the same time with St Paul, (Act. xiii. 2. 3.) They are both styled apostles, (Act. xiv. 14.) and constantly employed in apostolic works, (Act. xiv. 23. xv. 39. 40.—1 Cor. ix. 4. 5. 6.) Hence it is evident, that the apostolic office was not limited to those twelve, whom our Saviour appointed. Indeed, to an unprejudiced person it will appear no more necessary that the apostles should be limited to twelve, than that there should be always seven deacons, and that they should be invested for ever with extraordinary and miraculous powers, (Act. vi. 3. 8.)

There are also several other instances of men succeeding in the apostolic order, before the canon of

scripture was finished. Besides Epaphroditus, whom St Paul styles the "*apostle*," Phil. ii. 25. (though our translators render it *messenger*,) as well as his "*brother, and companion in labour, and fellow-soldier*," titles, which he does not give to the Presbyters and Deacons of Philippi, (Phil. i. 1.) and whom the ancient fathers affirm to have been Bishop of the Philippians,—and others whom St Paul calls "*apostles*," and the ancient fathers for that reason speak of as Bishops of the churches, (2 Cor. viii. 23.) we have a remarkable example in TIMOTHY, who was BISHOP or CHIEF GOVERNOR of the Church of Ephesus, planted by St Paul. The authority which Timothy exercised in this church, was conferred on him, not by any agreement or vote of the people, but by the imposition of St Paul's hands, (2 Tim. i. 6.—1 Tim. iv. 14.) By virtue of this authority he ruled the whole Church of Ephesus, Presbyters as well as private christians, in the same manner as the apostles had done. For he was empowered not only to "*command and teach*" the laity, but also exercise jurisdiction over the Presbyters,—to receive accusations, not only against private christians, but also against Presbyters, though in the latter case he was to proceed with more caution: "*Against a Presbyter receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.*" He was likewise empowered to ordain those whom he found properly qualified to be "*Bishops and Deacons*," and to "*lay hands suddenly on no man*," and in this manner, to continue the uninterrupted succession of church officers: "*The things which thou hast heard of me, the same commit thou to faithful men, who may be able to teach others*," (2 Tim. ii. 2.) Here is an entire account of almost all the parts of the apostolic authority, as it was exercised by

Timothy, whom the ancient fathers constantly style Bishop of Ephesus, and the Bishops of that See are called his successors; and twenty-seven of them are said to be derived from him in a continued line of succession, at the celebration of the great Council of Chalcedon.

The same authority, which Timothy had at Ephesus, was exercised in the Churches of Crete by Titus; whence he is declared, by the concurrent testimony of all antiquity, to be the first BISHOP of CRETE. So Eusebius (Lib. 3. c. 4.) affirms, that he received Episcopal authority over the Churches of Crete*. To this office he was ordained and appointed, not by the people's choice, but by St Paul; (Tit. i.) and by him he was empowered "*to teach all degrees of men, to exhort and rebuke with authority, to take cognizance of heretics, and to reject from communion such as did not repent upon the second admonition,—to set in order whatever St Paul had left wanting,—and lastly, to ordain Presbyters in every city.*"

Now, if Presbyters might have ordained others of their own order, I can see no reason, why these two apostolic men were left by St Paul, the one at Crete, and the other at Ephesus, for that purpose. For it is most certain, that there were Presbyters at Ephesus before Timothy was left there, and probably in Crete also †, before Titus was settled in that island; for it

* Τὸν ἐστὶν Κρήτης ἀρχιεπίσκοπον εὐαγγελιστὰν.

† But if there were no church officers of any denomination at that time settled in Crete, then, it is evident, Titus must have ordained in that island, without any Presbytery (as Timothy had at Ephesus) to assist him in it. *Slater's Original Draught of the Primitive Church*, p. 191, 3d edit. Dublin, 1723, in answer to *Sir P. King's Enquiry*, &c.

was St Paul's custom to "*ordain Presbyters in every church,*" (Acts. xiv. 23:) and if these could have ordained others, as the number of converts increased, it was unnecessary to set any person over them to perform that office. Suppose, (says Mr William Law*) when Timothy was sent to Ephesus to ordain Presbyters, the church had told him,—we have chosen Presbyters already, and laid our hands on them,—would such a practice have been allowed of in the Ephesians, and would ministers so ordained have been received as the ministers of Christ? And (observes Dr Brett,) had any such authority belonged to the whole body of christians in any church, or to the Presbyters,—can we think, that among so many epistles in the New Testament, sent to several churches, we should not have one word concerning ordination in any of them, but only in the two epistles to Timothy, and in that to Titus? This, I think, is a reasonable argument.

I shall now consider the arguments against the apostleship or Episcopacy of Timothy and Titus:

I. It is objected, that "they were a kind of itinerant officers, called evangelists, who were assistants to the apostles," Doddridge's *Lectures* II. p. 343 †.—With respect to Titus, there is not in scripture the least pretence for such an assertion. And that Timothy had not this power committed to him as an evangelist, is most certain, because mere evangelists had not such power; for then Deacons might have ordained and governed Priests. Philip the evangelist was a deacon,—yet it is certain that he pretended not to any such authority, (Act. xxi. 8. vi. 5.)

* *Second Letter to the Bishop of Bangor*, p. 97. 10th edit.

† See *Dr Graves'* remarks on this head, expressly in answer to Doddridge's objection. *Consecration Sermon*, 1806, p. 12.

“But is not Timothy called an evangelist?” (2 Tim. 5 .iv. 5.) I answer, no; for the text does not say, do the office, but the *work** of an evangelist, which no more makes him a mere evangelist, than the words following make him a mere deacon, for he is commanded “*to fulfil his deaconship*†.”—But he might be, at the same time, both Bishop, Evangelist, and Deacon.—What this work of an evangelist was, may be seen in the second verse of this chapter; “*preach the word, be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke,*” &c. All which every Bishop is obliged to perform; therefore this can be no proof that Timothy was an evangelist, and that his office was temporary,—and there is not a single duty which Timothy, as a minister of Christ, was obliged to perform, that was temporary.

II. Their occasional attendance on St Paul in his travels, can be no objection to their Episcopacy.—For granting that they did not continually reside, yet it is evident that they were invested with Episcopal power, a right to ordain and exercise those acts of government in the churches to which they were sent, which Presbyters have no right to exercise, and which Bishops now justly challenge, as appropriated to their order. For (as Mr Hoadly remarks,) it is to the office of Timothy (whether fixed at Ephesus during life or not,) that the Episcopal function, for which we contend, answers. It is not essential to a Bishop that he should be fixed at one place during life, but that he manage the business of ordination and government over whatsoever church he is placed, and for whatever length of time.—These frequent removals, there-

* Εργον.

† Τη Διακονια.

fore, cannot deprive them of that power, which they had superior to other Presbyters ; and they might, nay, if we give any credit to antiquity, they certainly did return to Ephesus and Crete, and died there, as the reader will find sufficiently proved by Dr Cave, in his *Lives of the Fathers*, p. 51. 63.

Timothy and Titus then, had that authority in the church which our Bishops now challenge ; wherefore St Paul, writing to the Philippians, joins Timothy with himself, as a person of the *same order and degree*, “ *Paul and Timotheus the servants of Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus, which are at Philippi, with the Bishops and Deacons,*” (Phil. i. 1.) In this verse we find mentioned the three *distinct* orders, viz. Paul and Timothy of the first order, that is, the order of Bishops, as they are *now* called ; the Priests or Presbyters then called Bishops, of the second order ; and lastly, the Deacons : For, as I intimated before, those whom we now call Bishops, were then styled apostles ; so says Theodoret expressly, (*Com. in 1 Tit. iii. 1.*) “ the same persons were anciently called Bishops and Presbyters promiscuously, whilst those who are now called Bishops were styled apostles. But in process of time, the name of apostle was appropriated to such only as were more strictly apostles (viz. the twelve,) and then the name of Bishop was given to those who succeeded them.” Thus he says, “ Epaphroditus was the apostle of the Philippians, Titus the apostle of the Cretans, and Timothy of the Asiatics ;” and this he repeats in several other places, (*Com. in Phil. i. 1. ii. 25.*) In like manner, Clemens Bishop of Rome, who was a disciple of the original apostles, is called by Clemens Alexandrinus, “ Clemens the apostle,” (*Strom. lib. 4.*) Ignatius Bishop of Antioch is called

by St Chrysostom "apostle and bishop;" and Thaddeus, who was sent by St Thomas to the Prince of Edessa, "apostle Thaddeus," by Eusebius; and so are also St Mark and St Luke by Epiphanius. And as the Bishops were styled apostles by St Paul, so they are called Angels by St John, which is another Greek word signifying a *messenger*: for it is evident that the angels of the seven churches were the apostles or Bishops of those churches, their office being such as we now call Episcopal, and the same which is exercised by our present Bishops. Episcopal authority is intimated in the rebuke given to the angel of the Church of Thyatira, for permitting a false prophetess to seduce the people; and this would not surely have been done, unless this angel had the power and authority of a Bishop, to exclude such a person from church communion. The angel of Ephesus, (Rev. ii. 2.) is particularly commended for "*trying those who called themselves apostles and were not so,*" i. e. who pretended to have authority to preach without a commission; and this seems to imply that he had judicially convicted them of being impostors. The angel of Pergamus, (ii. 14.) is reproved for having in his church those that held the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, and he is severely threatened unless he repented, which shows that he had authority to correct these disorders, otherwise he could not justly have been punished for them. And the angel of Sardis is commanded to be watchful, and to strengthen those who are ready to die, otherwise our Lord threatens to come on him, as a thief, at an hour which he should not know; plainly alluding to what he says in the gospel to "*his stewards,*" i. e. his apostles and other ministers whom he made "*rulers over his household the church.*"

It is pretended by some of our adversaries, that "these angels of the churches held their office for a limited time, 'as mere *chairmen* or *moderators* of the Presbyters." But we may justly infer the contrary to be true, from what is said to the angel of the Church of Smyrna, "*be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life,*" (Rev. ii. 10.) which must surely be understood of being faithful in his *office*, since he is here spoken to, not as a private man, but as an angel or Bishop of the church, and if his office had not been for life, then this precept had been nugatory. It will likewise be hard to shew, (says Mr Hoadly) how a prime Presbyter, by being only chosen president or *moderator* of the college of Presbyters, for the more orderly management of their joint counsels, should become chargeable with the faults of their churches, with which, according to this supposition, he had nothing to do. For it is manifest he could be no more accountable for any congregation but his own, than any of the other Presbyters, had he not the care of *others* committed to him in some peculiar manner: and this he could not have, if he were only moderator in the college.—It cannot, with any show of reason, be alleged, "that these angels were but simple Presbyters or parish priests in their several congregations," as Doddridge pretends, (*Lectures II.* p. 344.) for such eminent cities as these seven could not be supplied by a single Presbyter. Nay, it is certain that in Ephesus there were several Presbyters, whom St Paul sent for to attend him at Miletus, (Acts xx. 17.) consequently the angel of Ephesus cannot signify the Presbyter of that church, because the angel was but one, and the Presbyters were many. It may be farther observed, that the angels are every where spoken

to in the singular number as to single persons, except where there is an apparent apostrophe to the churches. This apostrophe is very plain in all those places where the plural number is used, but in that to the Church of Thyatira there seems to be a plurality of persons spoken to, before the apostrophe to the church, "*but unto you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira,*" (Rev. ii. 4.) To this we answer, that in the best Greek MSS. the *and* is omitted, and then the apostrophe is very plain here too, "*to you, I say, the rest in Thyatira.*" So that, (says Archbishop Potter) the angels of the seven churches having appeared to be single persons, invested with chief authority, we need not scruple to call them with St Austin, in one of his Homilies on the Revelation, and other ancient fathers, *Episcopos sive Prepositos Ecclesiarum*, the Bishops or Presidents of the churches*.

From the instances alleged †, (and the objections against them being answered,) we may see enough.

* I mentioned (says Dr Buchanan, in his interesting conversation with the present Bishop of the Syrian Churches, which have continued uninterruptedly orthodox, from the first ages to the present day,) that there was a Presbyter Church, (viz. the Presbyterian,) in our kingdom, in which every Presbyter was equal to another. "And are there no Deacons in holy orders?"—None. "What! Is there nobody to overlook the Presbyters?"—Not one. "And who is the ANGEL of the Church?"—They have none. "There must be something imperfect there," said he.—*Ecclesiastical Researches in Asia*, Lond. 1812. p. 123. Dr B.'s attempt to apologise for Presbyterian church government, by alleging the identity of the terms Bishop and Presbyter in the Syrian translation, is very futile, and evinces his ignorance of the divine foundation of the Government of that Church, in which he is himself a Presbyter.

† *Stiltsman's Episcopal Authority*, a Visitation Sermon preached at Leicester, Lond. 1708, p. 9.—The following text has been urged by some against our doctrine of the three orders: "*Christ gave*

to satisfy our own, and, in reason, the consciences of others, of the fairest proof from scripture, for this superior order above Presbyters; because we plainly see this power of ordaining church-officers and governing the churches, expressly applied to Timothy and Titus and the angels of the seven churches, and we do not see the same so applied to any of those understood as Presbyters by our opponents. Not to the Presbyters in Ephesus, nor to those in Crete—because only Timothy in the one, and Titus in the other, are said to have this authority; not afterwards to those in the seven Asian churches,—because it is applied particularly to the angel of each church; not to those in the acts and the epistles, called by the promiscuous names of Presbyters and Bishops; for the most that is expressed of them is, the oversight or

some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some teachers," &c. (Eph. iv. 11.) But, in the first place, these were not *distinct offices*, which required so many distinct *officers*; for the work of a prophet and an evangelist was sometimes performed by the apostles themselves, sometimes by Presbyters and Deacons, (Acts ii. 18.—xv. 32.) In the second place, these were only several *denominations* conferred on the standing officers of the church in their different capacities, and were all included in the names Apostles and Presbyters; as appears when the different degrees of church-officers were convened at Jerusalem. (See Acts xv. 2. 4. 6. 22. 23. xxi. 18. Deacons are not mentioned here, their office being very limited. See *Bishop Potter*, p. 227.) In short, they were only occasional commissions to execute some branches of the apostolic office, which could not be executed as things then stood, without an *extraordinary power*; and whenever God sees such to be necessary, he may grant similar commissions again.—As for those ecclesiastical officers among Presbyterians, called Lay Elders, their name and function were totally unknown in the time of the apostles; and we may justly say with Bishop Hall, that there were no such things *in rerum natura* for 1500 years after Christ.

rule of the people, (*feed the flock of God*, and the like,) but not of the *ministers* of God. To all which, if we add the united testimony of the church historians and fathers, and the universal consent of all churches for the space of 1700 years together, we may well conclude with the assertion of our church : *It is evident unto all men diligently reading holy scriptures, and ancient fathers, that, from the apostles' time, there have been three orders of ministers in Christ's Church,—Bishops, Priests, and Deacons.*

But although, during the first century, the name of apostle or angel was generally applied to those persons who were of the first order in the church, and that of Bishop or Presbyter to the second order ; yet immediately afterwards, these two names became distinguished. The succeeding governors of the church humbly abstaining from the name of apostles, because they were not *sent* * so immediately from Christ, and appropriating to themselves that of Bishops. This is the very reason given by Ambrose (in his *Commentaries on Epistle to Timothy*, as he is quoted by Salmasius, *De Primatu*, p. 40.) “ On the decease of the blessed apostles,” says he, “ those that were ordained to preside over the churches after them, were not equal to those first, nor could they attain the same gift of miracles ; but, appearing inferior to them in many other things, thought it not becoming to challenge to themselves the name of apostles, wherefore they divided the names, and left to them (*i. e.* the inferior order) the name of Presbyters ; and the others (*i. e.* the governors) were styled Bishops, and were endued with the power of *ordaining*, that they might know them-

* Αποστολοι.

selves to be set over the churches in *the fullest right*." From that time Presbyters were seldom or never called Bishops, and we find the three orders distinguished by the names of BISHOPS, PRIESTS (or Presbyters,) and DEACONS, as they are at this day; and the title of Bishop was thenceforth appropriated to those who had the power of ORDINATION, GOVERNMENT, and CONFIRMATION.—This I shall briefly prove by some few instances from the Fathers who lived before the Council of Nice, A. D. 325. I say, some few instances, because if I should collect all the numerous instances which may be produced to this purpose, from the Fathers of the three first centuries only, I might write a volume upon this one head*.

The first testimony I shall produce from the Fathers shall be taken from St IGNATIUS BISHOP of ANTIOCH, who was thrown to wild beasts by order of the emperor Trajan, A. D. 107, only four years after the death of John the apostle. In the beginning of his epistle to the Magnesians, he speaks of Damas their Bishop, of Bassus and Apollonius their Presbyters, and of Sotion their Deacon. To the Philadelphians he writes :

* On this head, consult the books referred to in page 21, and also Brokesby on the Government of the Prim. Church, in answer to Blondel, &c. 1712. Maurice's Vind. of the Prim. Church, against Baxter's History of Bishops, and Treatise of Episcopacy, &c. 1682. Slater's Original Draught of the Primitive Church, in answer to Sir P. King's Enquiry, 3d edit. Dub. 1723.—This work of Mr Slater convinced Sir P. King of his errors, and entirely brought him over to that author's opinions. Dr M'Dowel had possibly never heard of the Original Draught, otherwise I presume he would not have spoken of the Enquiry, as an "excellent work," and which has proved Presbyterianism to have been the primitive church government "by the most incontestible authorities!!" M'Dowel on Presb. Gov. Dub. 1808, p. 63.

"Let the Deacons obey the Priests, and both Priests and Deacons the Bishop, the Bishop Christ, as Christ obeys the Father." "Do nothing without the Bishop, love unity, flee divisions, be followers of Jesus Christ, as he is of the Father."—There are many other passages in the epistles of this glorious saint and martyr to the same purpose, wherein he distinguishes Bishops from Presbyters. And as for the cavils made against the genuineness of his epistles, or some passages of them, they are all most satisfactorily answered, and the honour of this holy martyr vindicated by Vossius, Archbishop Usher, Bishop Pearson, and Cotelerius.

CLEMENS ROMANUS, (mentioned by St. Paul, Phil. iv. 3.) in his genuine epistle to the Corinthians, written long before the death of the apostle St John, clearly distinguishes the Governors and the Presbyters. And after informing us, that our Lord appointed the persons who should minister to him in holy things, he proceeds in a clear and strong allusion from the Jewish to the christian priesthood, to name three orders, and after them the laity: "To the High-priest proper offices are committed,—to the Priests their peculiar office is assigned,—the Levites (or Deacons) have their own ministries,—and a layman is bound to laic performances. Let every one of you, brethren, in his proper station, give thanks to God, living conscientiously, and not transgressing the prescribed rule of his service or ministry." Sect. 40. 41.—edit. Cleric. Antv. 1698.

St IRENEUS BISHOP of LYONS, A. D. 167, says,—
"We can enumerate those who were instituted Bishops in the several churches by the apostles, even to ourselves," (Lib. 3. c. 3.—edit. Oxon. p. 200.) And "that the apostolic state of the church is known through all

the world by the succession of Bishops, to whom the apostles gave power to rule and govern the church," p. 360. For an answer to the objections against Irenæus, taken from the ambiguous meaning of the word *Presbyter*, see *Drury's Second Answer to Boyse*, p. 75, and *Third Answer*, p. 136, and also *Brokesby*, pref. p. 28.

ST CYPRIAN BISHOP OF CARTHAGE, A. D. 250, writing to Cornelius Bishop of Rome, says, "This, brother, is and ought to be our principal labour and study, even as much as we are able, to take care that unity may still obtain, which was delivered by our Lord and his apostles to us (Bishops) their successors." And as he thus speaks of Bishops as successors of the apostles, so he also shews that they are superior to Presbyters: "How great reason have we to be afraid of the wrath of God, when some Presbyters, neither mindful of the gospel, nor of their own station, nor thinking on the future judgment of God, nor considering that they have a Bishop now their governor, dare to assume all to themselves, to the contempt of their governor,—a thing *never before* attempted under any of my predecessors." (Epist. 16.—edit. Oxon.) But whoever desires to see the judgment of St Cyprian explained in the fullest extent, he may consult a book called *The Principles of the Cyprianic Age*, Lond. 1695, and *The Vindication of it*, 1701, written by J. Sage, formerly Bishop of Aberdeen.

CORNELIUS in his epistle to Fabius affirms, that in his Church (or, as we generally say, Diocese) of Rome, there were forty-six Presbyters and seven Deacons, *Euseb. lib. 6. c. 48.*

From the testimonies of particular persons, I proceed to those of entire churches. The apostolic Canons

were made by several councils in the three first centuries. The 1st Canon is this: "Let a Bishop be ordained by two or three Bishops,"—the 2d, "Let a Presbyter or Deacon be ordained by one Bishop,"—the 5th, "A Bishop, Presbyter, or Deacon must not put away their wives under pretext of religion,"—the 39th, "Let neither Presbyters nor Deacons perform any thing without the Bishop's permission."—Council of Laodicea, A. D. 321. "Let no clergyman travel without his Bishop's consent."

I might soon fill a large volume with citations from the Fathers and Councils within the first four centuries; for we have scarcely any writings of antiquity, which do not clearly distinguish the three orders of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons.

CHAP. III.

OF THE NECESSITY OF THE ORDER OF BISHOPS TO THE
CONSTITUTION OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

It has already been proved, that there are *distinct Offices* in the church; it follows then that there must be *distinct Powers* appropriated to each of them. And therefore, although the scriptures had been silent on this head, we might have safely concluded, from the different kinds of officers whom Christ has entrusted with the care and government of his church, not only that private christians are excluded from the exercise of any ecclesiastical power, but that some powers are appropriated in such a manner to the chief officers, that they cannot be lawfully exercised by those of inferior orders*.

The *exclusion of private christians from the work of the Ministry*, and the *distinction between Clergy and Laity*, is pretty generally admitted. "The administration of ordinances, (as a late Methodist writer † justly observes,) belongs to those only who have been

* *Potter on Church Gov.* p. 214. *Leslie on the Qualifications requisite for Administering the Sacraments*, reprinted in the *Scholar Armed*, vol. 1. 1812. *Wotton, Lewis, Turner, Hill, and Bennet's Answers to Tindal's Rights of the Church*, 1797-8.

† *Mr A. Scott* in a tract *On the Lord's Supper, and the Propriety of administering it among the Methodists*, Belfast, 1803. This tract has had an *extensive* circulation throughout the North of Ireland, otherwise I should not have taken notice of it.

called and separated to the work of the ministry. To none else hath Christ given authority. It was to ministers that Christ said, "*Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, baptising them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.*" Men are required to acknowledge that ministers possess this sole authority, "*Let a man account of us (says the apostle,) as ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God,*" (1 Cor. iv. 1.) Suitable gifts for the work of the ministry are not given to all, but only to some: "*He gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors, some teachers, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,*" (Eph. iv. 11. 12.) As there is a diversity of gifts, each should keep his own station in the church, and exercise in that way for which he is fitted, and to which he is called. "*But are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers?*" (1 Cor. xii. 20.) A diversity among the teachers of the church is as essential as it is among the members of the body: And if all were the eye, where were the hearing? If all were the hearing, where were the smelling? If all were the pastors, where were the flocks? If all were the ministers, where were the people to be ministered unto?"

I shall not insist farther on the proof of a distinction between Clergy and Laity, since I have already demonstrated that there actually existed in the time of the apostles, three distinct orders of ministers, viz. Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons; and that these offices were not personal, but were intended to be continued, and have, in fact, continued uninterrupted to the present day.—I proceed in the next place to prove:

1. That in order to undertake *lawfully* the office of a Bishop, Presbyterian, or Deacon, a Call or Commission from Christ the Head of the Church, is absolutely necessary.

2. That this Call or Commission can only be had from Bishops, to whom *alone* Christ conferred this power.

With respect to the first then, that a Call or Commission is absolutely necessary before a man can lawfully undertake the work of the ministry: We are told in express terms, that "*no man taketh this honour, (i. e. of being an officer in God's church,) but he who is called and commissioned by God, as was Aaron,*"—(Heb. v. 4.—Exod. xxviii. 29.) Nay even our Lord, who was both God and man, "*glorified not himself to be made an High-priest, but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son—Thou art a Priest,*" (Verse 5. 6.) Accordingly we find that he assumed no part of that office, which he came into the world to execute, till after that outward commission given to him by a voice from heaven at his baptism, (Matt. iii. 17.) for it is written, (Matt. iv. 17.) "*from that time Jesus began to preach.*" "So that (to use the words of a Presbyterian Doctor, in which all true churchmen will agree, but which, I fear, the Doctor will be unable to reconcile with his practice,) even Christ, as priest, was not *self-created* or *self-appointed*: No,—he received his designation, his appointment from the Father, and under this commission he acted. And after this declaration, and in the face of this inspired record, shall poor self-conceited presumptuous worms dare, without any appointment, to invade the sacred office! Ought not this passage to make many novices amongst us, who, from pride, vanity, or impatience of manual labour, start

at once into preachers,—and, without any regular appointment, arrogate to themselves the ministerial character, to tremble,” (M^dDowel’s *Nature of Presbyterian Government*, Dub. 1808. p.60.) In the necessity of a call to the sacred office, the *Methodists* also agree : “ St Paul maintains that a call is necessary, where he says, “*How can they preach except they be sent?*” The ground of God’s complaints against some of the prophets, is not their want of *abilities*, but their want of *authority*. “ *I have not sent them* (says he,) *yet they ran,—I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied,*” (Jer. xxiii. 21.)—Scott, *ut supra*.

Thus far we all agree, as to the necessity of a divine call or commission from God, before a person can lawfully undertake the work of the ministry ; the question is, *What constitutes this divine call?* Some think that it consists in, what they call, an *inward call* ; by which, if they mean any thing, they must mean a man’s being inwardly prompted by the Spirit of God to undertake this office. And I do not deny, but that this good Spirit may, and often does stir up a pious man to it, in the same sense that it excites him to other good duties. And these motions may be arguments to himself to enter into this sacred employment. But we are now enquiring after such a call as may satisfy *others* that a person is a lawful pastor ; and that must not be an inward call. For no man can satisfy others, that he is inwardly called, so fully, as that they may rely on him as their lawful pastor, without the *outward call*, unless he prove his inward call by miracles ; which, I suppose, they who allege it, do not pretend to.

It may be observed throughout the New Testament, that the *gifts* or *abilities* of church-officers are every-

where distinguished from their *outward commission*, and described as previous qualifications to it. Not only Bishops and Presbyters are required to have several qualifications, and give sufficient proof of them, and after that to wait for a *commission*, before they presumed to govern the church; but even the Deacons, however endued with natural and spiritual abilities, could not assume their office, till they had been approved and authorised by the apostles, or others invested with apostolic authority. Hence we are told, that the apostles directed the people to "*look out seven men, full of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom, whom we (say they) may appoint,*" (Acts. vi. 3.) Stephen, one of their number, is said, in particular, to be "*a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost,*" yet they were not permitted to exercise this least of all church-offices, till the apostles had *ordained* them by *prayer and laying on of hands*. Whence it is manifest, that no qualifications whatever are sufficient to empower any man to exercise any office in the church, who has not been first approved and commissioned by those whom God has invested with this authority for that end.

The opinion of the generality of our Protestant Dissenters is, that "*Gifts* for the ministry, and an *inclination* from a sense of duty to use them to that end, constitute a divine call, and that the church is to judge of a person's qualifications, and *appoint* him or not appoint him to the work, according to their judgment; and that both ministers and people should unite in the work of ordination," (Scott *ut supra*, p. 13.) "What do the Dissenters (says Palmer, *P. Diss. Catechism*, p. 32,) in general think concerning ordination?—They apprehend that every man who is qualified for the ministerial office, by *ability* and *piety*,

has a *right* to exercise it in any society that calls him to it ; and that *ordination* is *by no means necessary* to the discharge of it. Accordingly, many of their ministers preach several years before they are ordained. But they think it is very decent and useful, and agreeable to the scripture model, when they are about to settle with any people as pastors, to have their approbation, and the prayers, and the advice of some of their brethren, who pretend to no authority to constitute them pastors, that being only derived from Christ, and the choice of the people."

According to these schemes, it is plain that since the ordainers pretend to no authority to constitute their ministers, they must have their authority before they are ordained, all the after-solemnity being merely for *order's* sake.

1. But this notion is extremely absurd, and opens a gate for all impostors to preach the gospel without any ordination or commission. For if they possess "*gifts*, and an *inclination* from a sense of duty to use them," they are, without any farther ceremony, actually authorised ; and so men, women, and all sorts of people may set up for God's ministers. How easy is it for them to get some of their followers to say they are qualified by ability and piety, and if so, they immediately commence ministers of the gospel. As for their ordination by pastors, it is maintained that " it is by no means necessary to the discharge of the ministerial office ;" so that, according to this hypothesis, I can see no reason why a qualified person should be hindered from exercising his faculties, or from putting in execution that authority which God hath given him, only because some men will be so refractory as not to recognise it.

2. This notion of ordination invests the power of ordaining in all men, laity as well as clergy, which is no where to be found in holy scripture; for any man may *declare* another qualified for the office of a minister, and then, without any farther ceremony, he may dispense the sacraments of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is a notion that will leave the whole frame of church government at the mercy of every man's *power*.

3. A third reason against this notion is, that it gives not to the ordainers that *power* and *authority* which Christ gave them. For Christ tells them, "*as my Father sent me, so send I you,*" that is, as my Father gave me power to constitute a church here on earth, and appoint the governors and officers of it, so I give you *power* to make proselytes to it, and appoint governors and officers over it, to the end of the world: "*For lo! I am with you always, even to the end of the world;*" which is a general commission to them as his ambassadors, to act his part upon earth when he was gone, and therefore must be applied to every part of that power which he left them; for immediately when he said this he breathed on them, and said "*receive ye the Holy Ghost,*" (John xx. 22.) In this sense the apostles themselves understood it, as appears from their putting this power in execution. They thought they had received power from Christ to commission others, without which commission none could act as his ambassadors; and therefore whenever they ordained, they laid on their *hands*, which was a ceremony constantly made use of to signify the giving of power and authority. Thus St Paul tells Timothy that he gave him his authority "*by the putting on of his hands,*" (2 Tim. i. 6.) So that whatsoever power Timothy

received as a minister of Christ, he received by the hands of his ordainer.

We may then, without hesitation assert, that those gifts, to which ecclesiastical power is really consequent, are not ordinarily given by God, but by *human interposition*. And as for those gifts and qualifications which God bestows on men before ordination, they are not, nor ever were, such as entitled those who possessed them to any ecclesiastical office or authority. God may bestow his gifts to whom, and after what manner he pleases; but if he has constituted any particular sort of men his proxies, to admit others into any sacred office, we must seek our *authority* from them, if we expect any blessing from him in the discharge of our office. If we have not our commission sealed by such men as he has appointed in his stead upon earth, we shall be looked upon as intruders and rebels, instead of agents for Christ. And though the ordainers be no more than instruments, which God makes use of to convey his power to others, yet they are such instruments, without which no man can ordinarily receive any power as an officer or minister of Christ's Church, because he himself has made that the rule.

And how *displeasing* it is to God, for any man to assume any office in the church *without his commission*, is thus clearly stated by Dr M'Dowel in his late *Address on Presbyterian Ordination*, (Dub. 1812,) "Under the Old Testament, not an individual of any rank was permitted to approach the altar, and take any part in the public service, even in the meanest office, either in the tabernacle or temple, who had not been consecrated or set apart to that particular service, ac-

eording to the commandment of God. Not so much as a vessel was to be employed in the service of the sanctuary, which had not been consecrated or set apart from a common to a holy use. Nay, even the garments in which the priests officiated, were to be consecrated for the holy services, and the judgments of God inflicted upon Corah, Dathan, and Abiram, and their associates, with several others upon record, (1 Sam. xiii.—2 Sam. vi. 6.—1 Chron. xiii. 9.) furnish an awful lesson to succeeding ages, and strikingly mark the guilt and danger of those who dare invade the office of the priesthood without a divine call and appointment thereto." Indeed, under the christian economy, they who violate the laws of God are seldom punished in a visible and miraculous way ; but then, (says Archbishop Potter,) they are reserved to the future judgment of God, which, though it is more distant, and consequently less apt to affect unthinking men, is no less certain, and, if duly considered, far more terrible than any punishment inflicted in this life. And as the offices of the christian church are of divine appointment, as well as those of the Jewish,—and as much more sacred and honourable than they, as the substance is preferable to its own type or shadow ; so they who usurp these offices, though their punishment may not be so sudden, will undoubtedly find themselves in a worse condition in the next life, which is the proper season of punishment for offences against the gospel, than those who invaded the rights of the Jewish priesthood.

It has now been proved, that a call from Christ is absolutely necessary to undertake *lawfully* the work of the ministry ; and that neither an inward call, nor excellent spiritual abilities, nor an appointment by a

congregation constitute this sacred commission from the head of the church, the fountain and origin of all power. It can only be derived from Christ in these two ways. Either *immediately*, that is, from Christ himself interposing in the call of every minister,—or *mediately*, that is, from a succession of men to whom the apostolic charge and authority, delivered by our Saviour before his ascension; has been transmitted down from the first apostles*.

In the time of the apostles, many persons received their commission *immediately* from God, without any human ordination. Thus, Matthias was admitted to the apostleship by God's immediate appointment, (Acts i. 26.) and likewise St Paul was called to it by Christ himself from heaven, (Acts ix.) And accordingly he declares, that he was "*an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ,*" (Gal. i. 1.) In like manner, the members of the Church of Jerusalem, who were scattered abroad, (Acts viii. 4.) both preached and planted churches; and, if they were not commissioned by the apostles, (which we have no positive reason to deny,) it is evident that they acted in consequence of their miraculous endowments only,—and had no other mission than the extraordinary effusion of the Holy Ghost, (Acts ii. 1. 5.) and consequently, their gifts with their commission, they received immediately from God himself. And when any of our modern lay preachers, (who are so fond of quoting their example) shall exhibit the divine attestation, in the same manner as these spiritual persons did, (viz. by work-

* See *Bennet's Rights of the Clergy*, p. 59. 377. and some sensible remarks on this subject in the *Presbyterians' Jus Div. Min. Evang.* p. 114. Lond. 1654.

ing miracles, the gift of tongues, &c.) I will readily allow them the same authority, and acknowledge that they act by an equally valid, and apparently divine commission.

Whether any more of the clergy received authority immediately from God, I shall not now enquire. But it is evident, that there were many who received it *mediately* from him, viz. by the appointment of the apostles, to whom he had given full power to invest others with it; and this was the constant practice of the apostles. Wheresoever they converted men to the faith, they ordained ecclesiastical officers (as I have already shewn,) and consequently those officers derived their authority from God by the mediation of the apostles. It appears absolutely necessary therefore, that there should be a CONTINUAL SUCCESSION of men invested with the *same authority* as the *first apostles*, and deriving power from them to ordain and keep up a lawfully commissioned clergy to the end of the world. Our blessed Saviour promised to be with the apostles and their successors to the end of the world; wherefore it is his will, that others should succeed the apostles in their office, till that time arrives. And indeed, there is, and ever will be the same reason for continuing a succession of clergymen, as there was for the first institution of them. The same ecclesiastical affairs must always be taken care of; the same ordinances must always be administered; and consequently, there will always be the same necessity for the same sort of officers for the same purposes.

And accordingly we find, that the apostles not only continued the succession themselves, but also directed their successors to commit the things which they had

heard from them, to "*faithful men who should be able to teach others*," (2 Tim. ii. 2.) And thus in all parts of the christian church, those who had themselves received their authority from the apostles, conveyed it to others, and in that manner continued a succession of regularly commissioned clergy. And by these means, from the beginning of christianity down to our times, the clergy have derived their authority from Almighty God, by the *mediation* of the apostles and their successors, who from time to time were authorised to convey it to them, and to invest them with it*.

The manner of *conveying* this *authority*, was, from the beginning, done by *solemn imposition of hands*, accompanied with fasting and prayer. I confess, that imposition of hands was anciently used for other purposes also ; but that it was particularly made use of in ordination, no one can doubt. Thus were the first Deacons ordained, and Timothy Bishop of Ephesus is particularly directed to "*lay hands suddenly on no man*," (1 Tim. iv. 14. v. 22.) From thence it is evident, that ordination by imposition of hands was to continue in the church after the time of the first apostles. Moreover, this rite was always retained in

* The grand objection against the Succession, (according to Mr Palmer, *Prot. Diss. Catech.* p. 32.) is, that the "scriptures no where mention it as necessary to render ordination valid." But even granting that I have alleged no *direct* proof from scripture, yet is not the necessity of it fairly deducible from scripture? And is not every fair inference from scripture the mind of the Spirit? Do not the scriptures incontrovertibly establish the validity of evidence from inference? See some sensible remarks on this subject in *A. Carson*, a dissenting teacher's, *Answer to Ewing's Attempt*, &c. Edinb. 1809, p. 28. and also *A Relation of a Conference held by Bishop Stillingfleet and Bishop Burnet, with some Gentlemen of the Church of Rome*. Lond. 1676, p. 75.

all parts of the christian church, though ever so far distant from each other; so that this universal practice demonstrates the apostolic use and institution of it.— See *Jus. Div. Min. Evang.* p. 170, and *Bishop Potter*, p. 125.

I have now proved the necessity of an *outward* divine commission,—and that this cannot *at present* be procured from any, but those who derive their authority in an uninterrupted succession from the first apostles, who received it from Jesus Christ. This succession, as has already been shewn, is continued in the order of Bishops; consequently the authority or commission to undertake the office of the ministry, can only be procured from Bishops. And it clearly appears from scripture, that ordination was the peculiar privilege of one of the clergy superior to Presbyters, whom we now call Bishop. For we find (says Mr Nelson) no commissions granted, no orders conferred, no church-officers deputed to the exercise of spiritual powers,—but by those who had Episcopal authority, and who were superior to ordinary Presbyters. Our Saviour, after his resurrection, gave the apostles their commission to be the supreme governors of his visible church; and being invested with this power, they not only ordained Presbyters and Deacons, but conveyed this authority, not to every Presbyter, but to certain select persons, as Timothy, Titus, &c. And thus the succession has been continued in the persons of Bishops (and not of Presbyters,) to the present day*.

* The most absurd notion of ordination, is that which derives the power of ordaining from the *people*. In matters merely *human*, I grant, the people may invest one of themselves with civil power,

Thus therefore it is (says Bishop Beveridge,) that the apostolic office has been handed down from one to another, ever since the apostles' days to our time ; and so it will be to the end of the world,—Christ him-

as is the case in elective kingdoms ; but it is very different in things which relate immediately to God ; and the reason is, because the business of government depends on the law of nature and nations, —but the ordination of pastors is founded on a divine and positive institution. This is a power which Christ received from his Father, and gave it to his apostles. None can claim this power by any law, either of nature or of nations, or in any other manner than as Christ has conveyed it. And since Christ bestowed this power of ordination to none but the apostles, with a command of doing as he had done, it is plain that none can receive this power, but from those that are invested with it themselves.

To use the words of a late Presbyterian writer : No individual, no society of men can convey to another a power which they do not themselves possess ; but a congregation, a society of laics have not the power, and, according to the doctrine of scripture, cannot warrantably exercise the duties of the ministerial office. No, this belongs exclusively to those who have been publicly and solemnly set apart and ordained to the work. How then, can the people invest with a power, an authority which they do not themselves possess ? The idea is absurd. This would be to make the stream rise higher than the fountain from which it springs, (*M'Dowel's Presb. Mode of Ordaining*, Dub. 1812, p. 24.) This is excellent reasoning, but recoils strongly against its author and his associates. For I desire to know (since authority is absolutely necessary to the formation of a minister,) whence the present Presbyterian ministers received their authority ? If they have it not by a succession from the first apostles, I desire to know from whence they have procured it ? Not from the people, for this they disclaim. If they will say, they derived it from those ministers who ordained them, I ask then, whence did they receive their authority ? The answer must be, by a succession from those Presbyters who received this authority from our Saviour. But it has been already proved, that the power of ordination was, in the apostles' time, the peculiar privilege of one of the clergy superior to Presbyters, whom we now call Bishop,—and that the

self being continually present at such imposition of hands, thereby transferring the same spirit, which at first he breathed into his apostles, upon others successively after them, as really as if he was present

succession has been continued only in the superior order, and not in that of Presbyters, who never received any such authority.

But let us examine the texts which are brought to prove that Presbyters then possessed the power of ordination. It is alleged, that Timothy was ordained "*by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery,*" (1 Tim. iv. 14.) To this I answer, that St Paul, who was certainly superior to Presbyters both in order and power, was present, and laid his hands on Timothy, (2 Tim. i. 6.) Consequently this was no Presbyterian ordination, but one performed by a Bishop with the assistance of Presbyters, for the greater solemnity of the action; and this is the custom of our church also. Moreover it is evident, that the ordination could not have been valid without St Paul's concurrence; for, in 2 Tim. i. 6. the preposition used is *δια* by the imposition of my hands,—but in 1 Tim. iv. 14. it is only *μετα* with the laying of the hands of the Presbytery. And in producing effects, *δια* denotes the principal, and *μετα* the assistant causes.—The imposition of hands, mentioned Acts xiii. 3. which was performed by prophets and teachers, was no ordination,—but a peculiar benediction of two apostles, on entering on a peculiar expedition. See *Bishop Potter*, p. 287.

Such are the texts produced to prove that the first Presbyters possessed the power of ordaining; but in truth they prove the contrary. Therefore, since the power of ordination did not belong to the first Presbyters, it cannot belong to the (pretended) Presbyters of the present day,—and consequently "they cannot invest a man with a power which they do not themselves possess. The idea is absurd. This would be to make the stream rise higher than the fountain from whence it springs."—On the subject of Episcopal ordination, see *Thomas's Answer to J. Owen's Plea for Script. Ordination*, 1711. *Bishop Sage's Reasonableness of a Toleration*, 1705. *Invalidity of the Dissenting Ministry*, in answer to *Peirce, Owen, and P. King*, in two parts, 1717-18. *Episcopal the only Apostolical Ordination*, in answer to *The Case of Ordination*, 1713. *Hoadly's Defence of Episcopal Ordination against Calamy*, 1707.

with the apostles themselves, when he first breathed it into them. Insomuch that they who are thus ordained, are said to be made Bishops by the Holy Ghost himself, as well as the apostles were, (Acts xx. 28.) By which means, the holy Catholic Church always hath been, and still is truly apostolic, as it is called in the Nicene Creed. And the several parts of the apostolic office are now as effectually performed by their successors and others ordained by them, as they were while the apostles themselves lived. For it was not the *persons* of the apostles, but their *office*, influenced and assisted by the Spirit of God, that made the sacraments they administered to be valid, and their preaching so prevalent upon those that heard it. “*Though Paul himself planted, and Apollos watered, it was God only that gave the increase,*” (1 Cor. iii. 6.) And so it is to this day. All the efficacy that is or can be in the administration of any ecclesiastical office, depends altogether upon the Spirit of God going along with the office, and assisting at the execution of it; without which, the sacraments we administer would be but empty signs, and our preaching no more than beating of the air. Bishop Beveridge’s *Sermons*, Vol. I. p. 20.

I have, as I think, proved that there is a divine commission required to qualify any one to exercise the priestly office, and that seeing this commission can only be had from such particular persons as God has appointed to give it, therefore it is *necessary* there should be a continual succession of such persons, in order to keep up a commissioned order of the clergy. For (says Mr Law,) if the commission itself be to descend through ages, and distinguish the clergy from the laity, it is certain the persons who alone can give

this commission, must descend through the same ages; and consequently an uninterrupted succession is as necessary, as that the clergy have a divine commission. Take away this succession; and the clergy may as well be ordained by one person as another; a number of women may as well give them a divine commission as a congregation of any men; they may indeed appoint persons to officiate in holy orders, for the sake of *decency* and *order*, but then there is no more in it than an external decency and order; they are no more the Priests of God than those that pretended to make them so. If we had lost the scriptures, it would be very well to make as good books as we could, and come as near them as possible, but then it would be not only folly, but presumption to call them the word of God.

If it should be asked, "how it can be believed that the succession has been continued in our own, or any other Episcopal Church?" I answer in the words of Mr Law, why (to speak in his own terms,) it is *morally impossible* the succession ever should have been broken in all that term of years, from the apostles to the present time. The reason is this: It has been a received doctrine in every age of the church, that no ordination was valid but that of Bishops. This doctrine has been a constant guard upon the Episcopal succession; for seeing it was universally believed that Bishops *alone* could ordain, it was morally impossible that any persons could be received as Bishops who had not been so ordained. Now is it not morally impossible, that in our church any one should be made a Bishop without Episcopal ordination? Is there any possibility of forging orders, or stealing a Bishopric by any other stratagem? No, it is *morally*

impossible, because it is an acknowledged doctrine among us, that a Bishop can only be ordained by *Bishops*. Now as this doctrine must necessarily prevent any one being a Bishop without Episcopal ordination in our age, so it must have the same effect in every other age as well as ours ; and consequently it is as reasonable to believe that the succession was not broken in any age since the apostles, as that it was not broken within these 40 years.

And by perusing * the canons of the Primitive Church, it is obvious to perceive what a regard it had to the preservation of the succession. For instance :—In the canons of the ancient councils it is enjoined, that *a Bishop* should be ordained *by three at least*, and likewise, that “he should be constituted with the approbation of his metropolitan and com-provincials ;” which practices were certainly a very great security to the right succession ; it being very unlikely that all the Bishops of a province should be so careless as to suffer an irregular consecration, and the persons concerned in it all void of that character which they pretended to bestow. Now, although three Bishops were required at the consecration of a Bishop, yet it must be granted, that only one is *essentially* necessary. Let us suppose then, that one who was never consecrated himself should take upon him to consecrate others, that is, to convey an authority which he never received from Christ ; yet since two others would be joined with him, one of whom, if not both,

* See *Three Letters to (Hoadly) the Bishop of Bangor*, by W. Law, Author of the *Serious Call*. *Dodwell's Reply to Baxter*, Lond. 1681. *Johnson's Clergyman's Vade-Mecum*, Part II. pref. p. 84. *Clarke's Sermon at the Consecration of Bishops Sharp, Moor, Cumberland, and Fowler*, 1691. *Hume's Sacred Succession*, p. 243. Lond. 1710.

would without all doubt be a lawful Bishop, the orders of the persons so ordained must necessarily be valid; and, although the church of this usurper would, during his life, want a lawful Bishop, yet that want would be made up in his successor; unless we should suppose that possible to be done every day in former times which we now find impossible to be done *once*; viz. that such intruders should continually creep into the offices of Bishops undiscovered or unnoticed. So that, notwithstanding such single interruptions in the succession, it is still uninterrupted, and sufficient to convey to us our orders mediately from Christ, the fountain of all church power.

But it is objected, that the succession of Bishops in the western churches must have failed, because derived through the *idolatrous* Church of Rome, "which therefore has no authority to convey sacerdotal characters and offices in Christ's Church: the characters and offices therefore which she pretends to convey, are spurious, and of no validity or efficacy therein."

—*Towgood's Letters*.

To this we answer*, that the corruptions which for so long a period so unhappily prevailed in the western nations did not, and could not effect the validity of the apostolic commission, or put an end to the ministerial power, which it was designed to convey. The Church of Rome, with all her errors and abuses, did not cease to be a church, any more than a man whose soul is corrupted by vice, and his body with diseases, ceases to be a man, while his soul and body continue united. The Jewish Church, though frequently infected with idolatry and overrun with

* *Dr Brett's Divine Right of Episcopacy*, p. 80.

corruptions, never ceased to be a church so long as that economy continued; and though God frequently raised up prophets to threaten them for their idolatry and their sins, yet he never raised a new priesthood, nor authorised any but the sons of Aaron to appear in his holy place, and offer the sacrifices prescribed by the law. Their idolatry and corruptions did not divest them of the priesthood nor make any breach in the succession of it, but only made their sacrifices unacceptable, till those corruptions were reformed and cut off. In like manner the Church of Rome, though overrun with idolatry and corruptions, yet retaining the holy scriptures, the belief of certain essential articles of faith, &c. together with a regular succession of Bishops, cannot *cease* to be a church, nor its Bishops *cease* to be Bishops, and as capable of conveying that character to others after them, (as the idolatrous Jewish priests could and did convey it to their successors,) although it would be unlawful to communicate with them till they had forsaken their idolatry; besides, the word *Reformation* (which all Protestants have applied to their own communion,) obliges us to acknowledge the Church of Rome to be, in a certain sense, a church: for that is what we say we have reformed. And could we reform that which is not? We did not pretend to erect a new church, but to reform and correct the old one, which we found to have been overspread with notorious errors and abuses; these we justly cast off, but we pretend to cast off no more.— And therefore, as the succession of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons was no corruption, but an institution of Christ and his apostles, we judged it as necessary to preserve that succession as any thing else. It is true abuses had crept into the manner of conferring these

orders, yet since the essential parts remained in their form of ordination, we only lopped off the superfluous adjuncts, not thinking ourselves any more obliged to reject the *orders* themselves for the sake of the corruptions, than to reject the *word* and *sacraments* because they had corrupted them also *.

From what has been said, I think it will appear evident to the unprejudiced reader, that the power of ordination belongs only to Bishops, and consequently

* The principles maintained in this paragraph, passed for sound and current doctrine among the Presbyterians in the 17th century. They zealously asserted "that the ministry which is an institution of Christ, passing to us *through Rome*, is not made null and void, no more than the scriptures, sacraments, or any other gospel ordinance which we now enjoy, and which also descend to us from the apostles, through the Romish Church." This doctrine they affirm to be "a great truth, necessary to be known in these days," and direct that it should "be fully made out to their respective congregations," *Jas. Div. Min. Evang.* Lond. 1654, Part II. p. 433. They likewise prove the necessity of a *succession* from the apostles; and say that "*their ministry* is derived to them from Christ and his apostles, by succession of a ministry, continued in the church for 1600 years." If this principle be given up, they confess that they "must be forced to renounce their ministry, and take it up again from the people, who have neither commandment nor example in all the New Testament to authorise them to ordain them," *ib.* p. 45. 31. Some of the Methodists have likewise concurred in the opinion of the necessity of deriving their orders from an uninterrupted succession; but this succession they confess is peculiar to *Bishops* alone. "It would not be right, (says John Wesley) for us to administer either baptism or the Lord's supper, unless we had a commission so to do from those Bishops, whom we apprehend to be in succession from the apostles." *Journal* from 1743 to 46, p. 348. Their preachers seize all opportunities of procuring Episcopal ordination. See *Jones' Life of Bishop Horne*, p. 157. *Life of S. Staniforth*, who, with three other Methodist preachers, was ordained by a Greek Bishop, p. 87. Dub. 1802.

that no man can *lawfully* undertake the ministerial office, or preach and administer the sacraments *with any effect*, without an Episcopal commission. As for baptism and the Lord's supper in particular, they are not only religious actions, but seals and conveyances of grace. They have their blessed effects, not through the inherent virtue and tendency of their own nature, but by positive institution only : and God is not bound to communicate his heavenly influence by them, otherwise than as they are performed by his authority, and are thereby his own immediate acts. What impiety then must not that man be guilty of, who affixes God's seals without a commission so to do?—And as for preaching in church assemblies, it is acting in God's name and taking the character of his ambassador. Thus the apostles and seventy were sent forth to preach, and were thereby made God's messengers during our Lord's abode on earth ; and our Saviour vested the apostles, and in them their successors, with a commission to teach all nations ; so that the preachers of the gospel act “ *in Christ's stead,*” and as his “ *ambassadors,*” (2 Cor. v. 19. 20.) to whom he has peculiarly committed the ministry and word of reconciliation, and not to all christians in general, (ver. 18.) and therefore they are distinguished from lay christians as being “ *stewards of God's mysteries,*” (1 Cor. iv. 1.) I appeal then (says Dr Bennet) to any considering man, how great a sin it must necessarily be for any person that is not sent by God, to take upon himself the office of his messenger and ambassador,—to act as a steward of his spiritual blessings,—and to arrogate the dispensation of that which was never committed to him. How dreadful must the account of those lay preachers be, who come into church assemblies with

a lie in their mouths, pretending to an office which was never conferred on them, and thereby affront that great God whose authority they despise by acting without it, and whose household they disturb by violence and intrusion into its most sacred employments*.

It has been lately enquired, "what particular *clerical gift* is conveyed to a Presbyter by the laying on of the hands of a Bishop, which the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery cannot convey? Is the Episcopal gift different from the other in *kind*? Or is it only superior in *degree*? Does it take possession of a man's head, and guide him without the labour of much study, to all necessary truth, and inspire a divine eloquence in preaching Christ crucified? Does the person ordained by a Bishop, find himself endowed with more of the graces of the Spirit, or with greater talents for communicating knowledge, than the same person would do if he were ordained by a Presbytery?" &c. Mitchell's *Presbyterian Letters*, 1809, p. 17.

To this we answer explicitly †, that it appears from the scriptures and the writings of the earliest Fathers that those only who are now called Bishops, derive authority from the apostles to "*open and shut the king-*

* I grant that the laity may lawfully recommend christianity to their brethren, in ordinary conversation; but they must not preach *authoritatively*, because they have not God's commission. This is absolutely appropriated to the clergy; and so is offering to God the prayers of the church, which has always been reckoned one chief duty of the priestly office, (Acts vi. 4. xiii. 3.—James v. 14.—Rev. v. 8.) See *Bishop Potter*, p. 229. *Bennet's Rights*, p. 289. 312. *Burscough on Schism*, p. 144. *Brett's Div. Right of Episc.* p. 56. to 99.

† *Review of Mitchell's Presb. Letters*.—British Critic, Jan. 1810. See also *Review of Cook's Hist. of the Reformation in Scotland*.—Brit. Crit. May 1812, p. 474.

dom of heaven," or, in other words, to admit men into the church, of which Christ is the head ; and when such men "*walk unworthy of the vocation wherewith they are called,*" to cast them again out of that sacred society. We say explicitly, that the particular *clerical gift* conveyed to a Presbyter by the laying on of the hands of a Bishop, is authority to that Presbyter to open and shut the kingdom of heaven, or the church, in subordination to the Bishop under whom he ministers. We say explicitly, that though there may be Presbyters, who, without receiving this *particular gift*, by the laying on of the hands of the Bishop, pretend to open the kingdom of heaven, or the church, we find no evidence in the New Testament, or in primitive antiquity, that such Presbyters have any authority to do so, or that their ministrations can be of any efficacy. And we have no hesitation to say, that with respect to ordination, the Episcopal gift is as different in *kind* from the other, as the judgment of a court is different from the opinion of a lawyer at the bar. But while the church says all this, she is far from wishing to limit God's mercies ; or, as you and your associates falsely accuse her, far from dealing damnation round the land, on those who consider the authority of the clergy, and of course, the efficacy of their ministrations as of no importance. She thinks them herself of the highest importance. She thinks that every man, who has leisure and ability to inquire into the original constitution of the church and the authority of her ministers, is bound to do so without suffering himself to be biassed by interest or prejudice, or the rude railings of a polemical latitudinarian. She even presumes to say, that ignorance of such things can never be innocent, but when it is *invincible* ; and

that he who wilfully misleads the ignorant, incurs a sin of the deepest dye.' But while she thus bears her testimony to what she believes to be the truth, she leaves those who differ from herself to stand or fall, each to his own master.

The other questions in this extract about *knowledge*, and *eloquence*, and *graces*, and *talents*, are nothing to the purpose ; for so far as man is capable of judging of *graces*, we may venture to say, that as great a degree of *grace*, and *knowledge*, and *talents*, and *eloquence*, may be occasionally found in an honest *Quaker* as in a high Churchman. The *Quaker* was never baptised. Shall baptism therefore be banished from the church, because it does not always produce a manifest superiority in such as have by it been admitted into Christ's fold, over those who reject that sacrament entirely ? For communicating knowledge, the talents of Socrates probably surpassed the talents of any man at this day in the united kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland,—but Socrates was no christian. Is christianity therefore preferable to heathenism ?

But it is objected (and a popular objection it is,) that by maintaining the *divine* right of Episcopacy, we must consider Presbyterians and others who reject it, as entirely destitute of a lawful ministry, and consequently deprived of the sacraments, and cut off from Christ's Catholic Church. And is not it very uncharitable to think so ?—This is a very strange way of reasoning, as the learned Bishop Sage remarks. It is to make *practice* the standard of *principle*, and not *principle* the standard of *practice*. It is to bring the *rule* to the *example*, not the *example* to the *rule*. What ! must we throw up a solid *principle*, because such or such a church's constitution is not consistent with it ?

Must we disown a rule founded on so much reason, and so universally received by the Catholic Church for so many ages, because the owning of it seems to strike hard against the *practice* of some particular modern churches? It may with as good reason be said, that we ought not to insist decidedly on any doctrine whatever; for there is no doctrine of the church which will not meet with parties to whom it is obnoxious. For my part (says Dr Brett,) I cannot but think it the duty of every honest clergyman, to insist on such doctrines as we have received from Christ and his apostles, whomsoever the consequences may reflect upon. I can never think it charitable to sooth men in their mistakes, and give them cause to think I believe them right, when I know them to be in error. I am willing to believe as well of Presbyterians abroad and at home, as any man,—neither will I condemn them; they must stand or fall to him that is the master of us all. But as I think them to be in a dangerous error, I think it my duty to let them know it. I hope and pray that God will have mercy on all of them who offend in this or any other point, through ignorance, prejudice, or an unhappy education, and not of malicious wickedness. But I conceive the nature of christian charity obliges us upon catholic principles, to write them up to our church,—and not as the manner of some has been, to write our church down to them *.

And after all, can it be thought reasonable, or indeed lawful, for us to lay aside this primitive order

* See Dr Hicke's excellent remarks on this head,—*Two Treatises*, pref. p. 192, Lond. 1707,—and Dr Marshall's *Visitation Sermon*, entitled *A regular Succession of the Christian Ministry asserted*, p. 21, Lond. 1719. We may as well (as Mr Reeves observes,) re-

of Bishops? Or so far to comply with Presbyterians and others who reject Episcopacy, as to allow their ordinations to be valid? This would be to act contrary to a plain divine institution, and the constant practice of the whole Catholic Church in all ages and in all places, from the first establishment of christianity to the time of there formation? Our adversaries (as our countryman Mr Skelton justly observes,) never considered whether it was in the power of man to abolish, at his discretion, an order of the church, instituted by God himself;—and what was equally bold, to begin a new ministry with hardly any other mission than such as a number of men, and sometimes one man only, wholly unauthorised, should assume. From men thus sending themselves, or sent by we know not whom, we are to receive the sacraments. And, what is marvellous beyond all conception, this new species of ordination, though apparently of human institution, is now become too sacred to be interrupted, while that which seems at least to be of Christ, is laid aside. But why, in the name of wonder, may we not as well have a new mission every day? Hath the church, or rather the multitude, lost its faculty, so prolific 200 years ago, in the unequivocal generation of missions? We must not forget, however, that these new orders lay claim to scriptural institution and primitive example. What, all of them, and without *succession*? Do we hear of any man in scripture who ordained himself, or who presumed to take

form ourselves out of the inferior orders of Presbyter and Deacon as that of Bishop. And that if any one of these apostolic institutions might be nulled by human authority, so might the rest,—and so we might have a new form of church government every moon, or, if that seem best, none at all. Pref. to *The Apologies*, p. 33.

the ministry of God's word and sacraments upon him, without being sent either *immediately* or *successively*, by Christ? Or can an instance of this nature be assigned during the first fourteen centuries of the church? Or will even those Protestants, who adopted a new mission at the reformation, now suffer any one to administer the sacraments among them, without ordination, obtained in succession from that adoption? Do they not by this strictness practically confess, at least, the expediency of such a succession? But if a succession of this nature may be warrantably founded on their invention, why not on Christ's institution *?

Indeed many poor well-meaning Presbyterians are possessed with a false notion, that "Episcopacy is a relic of Popery," as they are pleased to term it.—This indeed is so far from being true, that I look on Episcopal government as the best way to keep out Popery, or any other error; for Episcopacy, as esta-

* *Skelton's Sermons*, published by Clapham, Lond. 1808, p. 215. All other churches have considered Ordination as of the greatest importance. The Church of Rome, the Greek Church, the Armenian Church, and even that pure Church of Syrian Christians discovered by Dr Buchanan in Malabar and Travancore, which never heard of the claims of the Pope, until the Portuguese came for a curse among them in the sixteenth century; all these consider Ordination by imposition of hands as *essential* to the constitution of a Church of Christ. Of such importance is this rite esteemed by the Syrian Christians, that their Bishop would not listen to the proposal of an union with the English clergy, until he was convinced that their orders are derived by Episcopal succession from the apostles. *British Critic*, May 1812, p. 475. *Buchanan's Christian Researches in Asia*, p. 120.—And upon this principle; when, about 30 years since, Reformed Episcopacy was about to be settled in the Independent States of America, the persons who were elected by the clergy to be the first Bishops, previously came from America to receive consecration from the hands of British Bishops.

blished in its just rights, utterly overthrows the papal pretences. And one thing proposed as a ground of our reformation, was, the retrieving the original rights of Bishops, which the Bishop of Rome had injuriously invaded, whilst he challenged the whole power of governing the Catholic Church, and making the Bishops only his curates. In order to diminish the powers of the Bishops, he used many methods, such as exempting the monasteries from their jurisdiction, and making them wholly dependent on himself, that the monks might be tools to secure his authority over the Bishops, in which service the order of Jesuits was chiefly instrumental; and for this purpose too, the schoolmen were set to work, to level Bishops as near as possible with Presbyters, by their subtle and nice distinctions. And it is certain, that in the council of Trent, the Italians made great efforts to have it decreed, that Bishops as distinct from Presbyters were not *jure divino*; and Lainez the Jesuit made a long harangue of above two hours to that purpose *. These men were sensible, that the asserting the true original power of Bishops, would evince the unreasonableness of the Bishop of Rome's encroachments on their just rights, and shew how justly they acted, who endeavoured to retrench his exorbitances. —As for the objection of a “Popedom being unavoidable from the Episcopal constitution of church government,” it is contrary to *matter of fact*, and stands now confuted by the consentient testimony and practice not only of the Episcopal churches of England,

* It is a mere contradiction (said he,) to say the Pope is head of the church, and the government monarchical,—and then maintain, that there is a power or jurisdiction in the church not derived from him, but received from others. *Hist. Conc. Trid.* lib. 7. *Bramhall's Works*, p. 619.

Scotland, Ireland, North America, Sweden, &c. &c. but also of the Greek and Oriental churches.

I fear that if the church should ever lose this primitive government of Bishops, it would lose its primitive doctrine, and change christianity for Socinianism, which has at this time infected many of the church's enemies, who labour to overturn Episcopacy, that they may more easily spread their false doctrines. For it is observable (says our learned Dr Maurice,) that in these last ages there have been no heretics, who have not been likewise Anti-Episcopal, and at the same time that they have become enemies to the truth, they declare war against the Bishops who are the guardians of it. And there were more heresies started up in England in the space of four years after Bishops had been laid aside, than there have been known in the universal church since the foundation of it to that time. This is acknowledged by Mr Edwards, a Presbyterian divine, who (in his *Gangræna*, dedicated to the Parliament in 1646,) says, "In these four last years we have surpassed the deeds of the Prelates, and justified the Bishops, in whose time never so many nor so great errors were heard of, much less such blasphemies and confusions; we have worse things among us than ever were in all the Bishop's days, more corrupt doctrines and unheard-of practices than in eighty years before. The Bishops and their chaplains (who were accounted time-servers,) opposed the errors of the times, but the Presbyters suffered all kinds of errors and schisms to come in, when they were in place; certainly the Bishops and chaplains shall rise up in judgment against the ministry of this generation."

I might here produce the words of many eminent men among the foreign Protestants wanting Bishops,

acknowledging that the government of the church was Episcopal in the next age after the apostles,—particularly the famous M. Le Clerc, whose words (in his book *De eligenda inter dissentientes christianos sententia*, subjoined to his edition of *Grotius de Veritate*, &c.) are these : They who *without prejudice* read what remains of the most ancient christian writers, know well enough, that the Episcopal form of church government, such as it is in the southern parts of Great Britain, obtained everywhere in the next age after the apostles ; whence we may collect that it is of apostolic institution.—M. Le Moyne, preacher to the reformed congregation at Roan, confesses that “truly I believe it is impossible to keep peace or order in your church, without preserving the Episcopal dignity. I confess I know not by what spirit they are led, that oppose that government, and cry it down with such violence. For I beseech you, let us not flatter ourselves in France, where we have a Presbyterian government, that we are not subject to many divisions, which the equality of pastors is not able to compose ; and which a synod consisting of equal persons, and of Elders and Deacons, who often have but little skill in ecclesiastical government, is not able to stop ; because the authors of the evil hold themselves to be of equal power with those that are of prime note, and despise them that are ordinarily employed to heal those distempers. It is Episcopacy which upholds the Lutheran churches ; for in Denmark, Sweden, and Germany, they are very quiet under the Episcopal discipline, and seldom are seen to slander and tear each other *.”

* *Durell's Government of Reformed Churches abroad*, p. 126. I have, in this edition, omitted Calvin's and Beza's testimonies for Episcopacy. See *The Indep. Power of the Church*, Lond. 1716, p. 35.

It is worthy of remark, that when the Presbyterian Assembly at Westminster, under the influence of the Scotch Covenanters, applied to the learned Blondel to bring forward what could be said in favour of the Presbyterian form, with the view of giving countenance to the plan in agitation for overturning Episcopacy in England, he concluded his *Apologia pro sententia Hieronymi* with these words: "By all that we have said to assert the rights of Presbytery, we do not intend to invalidate the ancient and apostolic constitution of Episcopal pre-eminence; but we believe, that wheresoever it is established conformably to the ancient canons, it must be carefully preserved; and wheresoever, by some heat of contention or otherwise, it has been put down or violated, it ought to be reverently restored." This conclusion not being suited to the object the assembly held in view, was, in consequence of very pressing remonstrances against it, kept back,—though in justice to truth it ought to stand on record, as it here does. See Durell, *ut supra*, p. 339*.

Upon the whole, Episcopal government is necessary, not only because it is the form *instituted* by our Saviour and his apostles,—but because, without an Episcopal commission, the word cannot be preached,

* Almost every book or pamphlet published against Episcopacy, within the last hundred years, contains that unfounded assertion, that Bishops, in the opinion of our Reformers, were merely of *human* institution. For a refutation of this falsehood, see *Drury's First and Second Answers to Boyse. Hume's Sacred Succession*, p. 285. Bishop Stillingfleet is also asserted to have maintained such opinions in his *Irenicum*. But this great man lived to retract that production, (see Pref. to his *Unreasonableness of Separation*, p. 81.) and "I hope it will be a good example to some others." See *Drury's Second Answer*, p. 87.

nor the sacraments administered *with any effect or validity*; and therefore those divines in our Episcopal churches, who speak of Episcopacy as a matter of mere expediency, and that church government may be accommodated to the exigencies of the state, differ as widely from the holy scriptures, as from the articles they have subscribed. We do not (says the celebrated William Law,) say, that Episcopacy cannot be changed, merely because we have apostolic practice for it,—but because such is the nature of the christian priesthood, that it can only be continued in that method, which God has appointed for its continuance. Episcopacy is the only instituted method of continuing the priesthood; therefore Episcopacy is unchangeable. The apostolic practice, indeed, shews that Episcopacy is the order that is appointed; but it is the nature of the priesthood that assures us that it is unalterable. So that the question is not fairly stated when it is asked whether Episcopacy, being an apostolic practice, may be laid aside? But it should be asked, whether an instituted particular method of continuing the priesthood be not necessary to be continued? Whether an appointed order of receiving a commission from God, be not necessary to be observed in order to receive a commission from him? If the case were thus stated, as it ought to be fairly stated, any one would soon perceive, that we can no more lay aside Episcopacy, and yet continue the christian priesthood, than we can alter the terms of salvation, and yet be in covenant with God.

CHAP. IV.

OF THE NECESSITY OF CHURCH COMMUNION, AND THE
SIN OF SCHISM.

HAVING now explained the nature of the Visible Catholic Church, I proceed next to inquire into the necessity of Church Communion and the Sin of Schism, by which I mean the necessity of entering into, and continuing stedfastly in the *external* communion or society of the church, and the sin of separating, or being in a state of separation from it *.

Some men, (as Archbishop Potter observes,) have conceived the christian church to resemble a society of philosophers, where many useful and excellent truths are taught,—but no man is obliged to come into it; or to continue in it; and if any man has learned the truths which are there delivered by any other means, it is all the same as if he had lived in the society. In their opinion, there lies no farther obligation on any man to be a member of the christian church, than as this is a means to the knowledge of the christian religion: which being once obtained, they think men may be saved by keeping God's commandments, without associating themselves with any body of christians.

For the confutation of these notions, I assert that

* See *Potter on Church Gov.* p. 12. *Burscough on Schism*, Lond. 1699. *Sherlock's Def. of Still.* p. 138. and *Vind. of do.* p. 89. *Sherlock's Discourse of Religious Assemblies*, p. 132 4th edit. 1726. *Necessity of Church Communion, against N. Taylor*, 1702. *Bennet's Rights of the Clergy*, 1711.

it is necessary for every person, to whom the gospel is preached, to become a member of the one, holy, perpetual, Catholic Church of Christ. I say, it is necessary for every person to whom the gospel is preached, because I do not, by any means, presume to determine any thing concerning the final condition of those who never heard of the gospel, and wanted an opportunity of embracing it. The ignorance of such persons is involuntary and invincible ; and their not associating themselves with Christ's disciples, is an instance, not of *obstinacy and disobedience* to God's call, but of *incurable blindness and moral incapacity*. And therefore we charitably hope well of their final condition, considering that they are in the hands of a compassionate God, who will not suffer his creatures to perish eternally, otherwise than by their own fault.

But as for those who have enjoyed *means of conviction*, it is undoubtedly necessary for them to be so effectually wrought upon by it, as to become members of Christ's Church. For God's promulgation of the *gospel* to them, is a divine command to embrace it ; and our Saviour's authority in founding the *church*, obliges them to enter within its pale. And if they act otherwise, they forfeit the blessings which are promised to Christ's disciples ; they lie subject to that wrath from which the blessed Jesus came to set them free, and provoke God to pour on them judgment without mercy, by adding all possible aggravations to their guilt. So that, if it be a matter of consequence to obtain the greatest happiness, and escape the greatest misery, it is necessary for them to become Christ's disciples, or members of his church.

It is in vain to pretend, that they may repent and amend their lives, and consequently escape that into-

lerable vengeance, although they are not united to the *church*. For it is impossible for them to amend without the assistance of God's *Grace*, and his grace is ordinarily promised to none, but those who are *members* of "*his body the church*," (Col. i. 24.) This I shall attempt to prove by shewing, that the Visible Church is a Society of God's appointment,—that we cannot otherwise become members of Christ, than as we are members of his church,—and from the heinousness of the Sin of Schism.

The Church is a Visible Society of God's appointment.—Although this has been sufficiently proved in the preceding chapters, yet there are some objections to be taken notice of. For some having observed, that the *kingdom* or *church* of *Christ* is plainly distinct from all *worldly* kingdoms; that the *graces*, whereby our *inward* communion with Christ is maintained, are *invisible*; and that some who live in the church's *external* communion, have no title to the chief privileges of the church, by reason of their wicked lives, have hence concluded, that the *true* church consists only of such men, as have a title to God's favour by their faith and other christian virtues, the sincerity whereof is *invisible* to the world; and that whoever is adorned with these *inward* qualifications, does by them maintain a strict communion with Christ, and enjoy all the privileges of the christian church, though he has never *associated* himself with any *visible* body of christians*.

* This distinction between the *visible* and *invisible* state of the church, is very important. Many are really members of the visible church, who are not members of the invisible,—that is, many are *professed outward* members of the church, although not regenerated and united to Christ, and continue members of it, till cast out by ex-

It is true, that to live in the *external* communion of the church, though it confer a right to all its outward ordinances, yet, unless it be accompanied with faith and obedience, does neither entitle us to any of the *inward* blessings, which are conferred on the worthy receivers of those ordinances here, nor to eternal life hereafter. Neither shall we deny, that it is possible for men to be excluded from the *external* communion of the church, and at the same time maintain an uninterrupted *invisible* communion with Christ; which is the case of all those who are unjustly excommunicated. Yet still we affirm that the Catholic Church, whereof every one is obliged to be a member, is an *External and Visible Society of God's appointment*; for it is constantly mentioned as such in the scriptures. Thus, "*Tell it to the church;*" "*if he neglect to hear the church,*" (Matt. xviii. 17.) Paul and Barnabas are said to be "*brought by the church, and received by it at Jerusalem,*" (Acts xv. 3. 4.) The Presbyters at Ephesus are commanded to "*feed the church of God, over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers,*" (Acts xx. 28.) And God "*added to the church daily, such as should be saved.*" Since then the church is an External Society of God's appointment, it follows that all men are obliged to become members of it: for he who does nothing in vain, would not have instituted a society, into which he did not intend that men should enter. And therefore whoever *neglects* to be made a member of the church, contributes to frustrate the design of God, by whom it was founded.

communication. Our adversaries themselves allow, "that men who have no religion, provided they have the *appearance* of it, are to be admitted to the sacred ordinances." See this point argued in *Allen's Catholicism*, 1683; also *Lamb's Fresh Suit against Independency*, 1677.

Moreover, the church is a body of that nature as consists of a variety of different offices and officers, which are of no manner of use without actual and visible communion of all its members. For, to what purpose has he instituted a standing ministry to offer up the prayers of the faithful to God, to instruct, exhort, reprove, and administer the sacraments, if private christians are not bound to *maintain communion* with them in all religious offices? Moreover, the christian people are expressly charged, "*not to forsake the assembling of themselves together,*" but "*with one heart and with one mouth to glorify God,*" "*to come together with one accord in prayer and praise,*" and at the same time, "*to obey them that have rule over them, and to submit themselves, for they watch for their souls,*" (Heb. xiii. 17.)

I observe further, that the union of particular christians to *Christ*, is *by means of their union to the christian church*. The church is "*the body of Christ,*" and every christian, by being united to this *body*, becomes a member of Christ, as the apostle tells the Corinthians, (1 Cor. xii. 27.) "*Now ye are the body of Christ and members in particular ;*" an allusion which at the same time implies, that all the members must be united to the *body*, through which life and aliment are supplied; and all must likewise be united *one to another*, that the several functions of the body may be properly discharged. The church is the "*temple of God,*" "*built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone,*" and every christian is a lively *stone* in this spiritual building. The church is Christ's "*flock,*" and every christian who is of this fold, is one of Christ's "*sheep.*" The church is Christ's "*spouse,*" and every christian is a *member* of that so-

ciety which Christ acknowledges as his spouse. Thus also, *Christ* is called the "*vine*," of which he is the root, and christians the "*branches*," (John xv.) A secret and private faith in Christ therefore, is not ordinarily sufficient to make any man a christian; but *faith* in the *heart*, and the *confession* of the *mouth* are both necessary, (Rom. x. 9. 10.) Christ himself hath appointed the public sacrament of our initiation, and our church teacheth her children, that in their baptism (which is their solemn admission into the christian church,) "they are made members of Christ, the children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven."

This is farther confirmed by the institution of the *sacraments*, which our Saviour has instituted as symbols of our union with him. Thus *Baptism* (at which we make a public profession of our faith in Christ,) is the sacrament of our admission into the christian church, "*for by one Spirit, we are all baptised into one body*;" and more expressly, (Eph. iv. 4.5.) "*there is one body and one Spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism*;"—that is, the christian baptism is but one, and is a sacrament of union, making us all the members of that one body of Christ; and this is called being "*baptised into Christ*," *i. e.* admitted into the christian church by a public profession of faith in Christ. In like manner, the *Eucharist* is a sacrament of *union*, and signifies that close conjunction between Christ and his church, and the mutual fellowship of one christian with another. Hence the apostle calls "*the cup of blessing, the communion of the blood of Christ*," and "*the bread, the communion of the body of Christ; for we being*

many, are one bread and one body*, (one body represented by this one bread,) *for we are all partakers of that one bread*," (1 Cor. x. 16. 17.) For the intention of our Lord and Saviour in what he did and suffered for us, was not merely to reform and save some *single* persons, but to erect a church and combine all his disciples into a *public society*, to unite them by holy mysteries, and engage them to a mutual discharge of all christian offices, whereby "*the whole body might edify itself in love*;" and therefore, our Saviour does not ordinarily own any relation to particular men as such, but as they are members of his body, "*for he is the Saviour of the body, and redeemed his church with his own blood*," (Eph. v. 25.—John x. 11. xi. 25.—1 John ii. 1.) It will not suffice, therefore, that we make Christ our own, by a fanciful application of his merits to ourselves, which would quickly overturn the church, and render useless the institutions of our Saviour, as we find this conceit has in a great measure done already; but we must receive Christ and all his blessings as he is pleased to bestow them.—But then we must observe farther, that although Christ is our Lord and governor, yet he does not govern us immediately by himself, but has left the visible and external government of his church to *Bishops* and *Pastors* who pre-

* By these words, *There is one bread*, "the apostle (according to Calvin, *in locum*,) admonishes the Corinthians that it is their duty to maintain that unity they have in Christ, by an *external profession* (i. e. by an external and visible communion,) for so he adds: "That they must all meet together to celebrate that feast, which is a symbol of that sacred unity." See also the opinion of the Fathers, on this subject, in *Sherlock's Def. of Still.* p. 203. and *Archbishop Usher's Sermon on 1 Cor. x. 17.*

side in his name, and by his authority : which is a plain demonstration that the union of particular christians to Christ, is by means of their union with the christian church, which consists in their regular subjection to their spiritual guides and rulers, and in concord and unity among themselves. For if our union to Christ consists in our subjection to him as our *Lord* and *master*, our *head* and *husband* ; and this authority is not immediately exercised by *Christ himself*, but by the *Bishops* and *Pastors* of the church,—it necessarily follows, that we cannot be united to Christ, that is, cannot acknowledge his authority and government, till we unite ourselves to the public societies of christians, and submit to the public instructions, authority, and discipline of the church ; as no man can be said to submit himself to his prince, who denies subjection to those subordinate magistrates who act by his commission.

This is confirmed beyond question by the scripture notion of *fellowship* and *communion with God*, which signifies what we call a political union,—that is, to be members of that society which puts us into a particular relation to God : that God is our father, and we his children,—that Christ is our head and husband, our Lord and master, we his disciples and followers, his spouse and body. Thus, in 1 John, i. 3. “ *That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that you also may have Fellowship with us, and truly our Fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.*” Where we may observe, that our fellowship with the Father and Son, is first founded on our fellowship with the christian church, *i. e.* on our profession of the faith of Christ, obedience to his laws, subjection to his government and discipline, which he now exercises by

by the Bishops and Pastors of the church, and which unites us into one society and body politic ; and by virtue of our fellowship with the christian church, we have fellowship with Christ, who is the supreme head and governor of it *. Thus also, in 1 Cor. i. 9. "*God is faithful, by whom ye are called into the Fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord,*" where the fellowship of Christ can signify no more than the fellowship of the christian church, whereof Christ is Lord and head ; and therefore the apostle immediately adds in the next verse, "*Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment.*" Where he argues from the nature of their faith in Christ, to the obligations of peace and unity, which plainly evinces that this fellowship with Christ, is that relation we stand in to him, as members of the christian church, whereof he is head.

And that the first apostles considered the external communion of the church as essential to salvation, is evident from their proceedings. For into the church or spiritual society under their government, all were baptised, all were required to pay obedience to its institutions, and hold communion in its prayers and or-

* If this profession be only external and visible, without the conformity of our hearts and lives to the laws of Christ, it gives us only an *external* fellowship or relation to Christ, *i. e.* such men only appear to be in fellowship with Christ, maintaining a visible fellowship with his church, when in truth they are perfect strangers to him, and such as Christ will not own as his disciples, as St John adds, ver. 6. 7. "*If we say that we have fellowship with him,*" &c. *Sherlock's Def. and Contin. of the Disc. on the Knowledge of Jesus Christ*, Lond. 1675, p. 115.

dinances; and "*they remained stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers,*" Acts ii. 42.

But here a popular objection arises : That Christ has promised salvation to all that call upon his name, and that to love God and our neighbour as ourselves, is the *fulfilling* of the moral law,—and this too, without any mention of church communion.—*Answer.* By this argument, both baptism and the eucharist may be dispensed with, as well as church communion !—But how can we love God, unless we serve and honour him in the manner he has instituted, viz. by entering into his church, and joining with it, when it is in our power, in all the acts of public worship. When it is in our power, I say, for church communion is not *absolutely* necessary, neither is baptism, nor the eucharist. Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, indeed, is absolutely necessary, for "*without Faith, it is impossible to please God,*" (Heb. xi. 6.)—But the institutions of Christ are only *ordinarily* or *generally* necessary, that is, necessary where they can be procured ; and whoever wilfully neglects them, is guilty of a damnable sin.

This (to use Archbishop Potter's words,) is plainly the doctrine both of the scriptures and of the Catholic Church in all ages ; and to say that a man may repent of his sins and keep God's commandments, without being thus admitted into the christian church, implies a manifest contradiction ; this being one of the first and chief commandments of God, that all men be so admitted.

The knowledge of these great truths ought to make it a leading object of christian duty, to *embrace* and *continue stedfastly* in the *external communion* of the Ca-

tholic Church. The salvation of all the faithful members of it, is secured to them by a covenant, "*They are under promise, and he is faithful who promised,*" (Heb. x. 23.) But it is impossible to speak with the same assurance of faith, of those who hold no communion with any apostolic church, who, as they do not enter into the *fellowship* of Christ's religion, have no right or title to its glories and rewards. It is of infinite consequence (says the late Mr Jones,) that we should be able to know with certainty, whether we are in the church or out of it. If we are out of it, we are in the world. If we had been out of the ark, we should have been drowned. It is true we may be *in* the church, and yet be *lost*,—for was not Ham in the ark, who was a reprobate? But if we are out of the church, how can we be saved?—This account of our union to Christ, is a plain demonstration of the evil and danger of SCHISM; for if our union to Christ, as our head, necessarily requires our union to the christian church, which is his body,—so to divide from the christian church, or from any true and sound part of it, not only makes a rent in the body of Christ, which is in itself a very great sin, but divides us from Christ, as a member which is separated from the body, is separated from the head also.

There are (as Mr Kettlewell observes,) two kinds of Schism: 1. The schism of particular *members* from their own churches, in throwing off subjection and dependance on their Bishops: 2. The schism of particular *churches* from their sister churches, in rejecting fraternal communion with them. The former I shall chiefly insist on at present, being more prevalent than the latter, and much more destructive of the unity of the church, and the external interests of the individual.

The great duty of preserving the unity of the church, in obedience to the command of our divine master, was, in the apostolic age, emphatically asserted and zealously maintained, inasmuch as this church is represented as "*one body*," of which Christ is the head and Saviour, (Eph. iv. 15. 16.—Col. ii. 19.) This St Paul makes a powerful *argument* to unity, "*endeavouring to hold the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace ; there is one body and one Spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling ; one Lord, one faith, one baptism,*" (Eph. iv. 3.) What does this bond of peace signify, but the *external* communion of the church, when christians live together as members of the same body, and united to each other, as members of the same body are by nerves and sinews ? All those expressions, whereby the scriptures describe the unity of the church, signify *one* communion ; as our Saviour prays for his disciples, "*that they all may be one,*" and for all those who in future ages should believe in him, "*that they also may be one,*" and that so visibly, "*that the world may*" perceive it, and thereby know and "*believe that thou hast sent me,*" (John xvii. 20.) From whence it appears, that our Saviour speaks of an *external* and *visible* union, which may be taken notice of in the world, and so become an inducement to encourage men to embrace the christian faith. Therefore (observes Bishop Grove,) as we would avoid the hardening of men in atheism and infidelity, and making the prayer of our dying Saviour, as much as in us lies, wholly ineffectual, we should be exceedingly cautious that we do not wilfully divide his holy Catholic Church.

This external visible union consists in maintaining *one communion* and *fellowship*, i. e. a readiness to pray and communicate together, and join in all acts of

christian worship, faith, and charity with each other.

“*By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another:*” that is, if ye love so as to unite, not only in faith and affection, but in *worship* also. For a readiness to worship God together must evince, as much as any thing else, our unity in discipleship, and that we are all servants of one and the same Lord and master, (John xiii. 35.) And accordingly, *prayers* and *sacraments* are set down among the *bonds of union*, which unite together the members of this one church. Of the eucharist St. Paul says, “*we being many are one bread and body, being all partakers of that one bread,*” (1. Cor. x. 17.) and of baptism, “*we are all baptised into one body,*” (1 Cor. xii. 13.) and “*as many as have been baptised into Christ, are all one in Christ Jesus,*” (Gal. iii. 27. 28.) And among those various ways, whereby the church becomes one body, he lays down as “*one faith,*” which they all profess: so “*one baptism,*” whereof they partake,—“*one God and Father of all*” whom they all invoke with one hope,—and “*one Lord*” whom they all serve and worship, (Eph. iv. 4. 5. 6.) And how pathetically does the same apostle exhort us to *christian love* and *unity*, by all the mutual endearments that christianity affords: “*If there be, therefore, any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,—fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind,*” (Phil. ii. 2.)

Thus it appears, that the Church of Christ is a well organized body, in which every member has its due place and office, and the several parts have a mutual subserviency, and co-operation to the good of the whole. Wherefore St Paul exhorts “*that there be no*

schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care one for another," (1 Cor. xii. 25.) In another place he says, "*God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.—Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment*,*" (1 Cor. i. 9. 10.) And in what manner this unity was preserved among the primitive christians, we learn from the first pattern of the christian church, "*and they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers,*" (Acts ii. 42.) that is, they continued perfectly united with the apostles and with each other, in the congregations of the faithful, in the use of the sacred ordinances, and in the form of worship.

Having thus briefly explained the necessity of an external visible unity in the Catholic Church, I shall next shew in what manner this is to be preserved by the members of particular churches †. The Catholic

* It is well worthy of remark, that the apostle does not, in this instance, charge his converts with rejecting or betraying any material point of doctrine, but reproves them for dividing into parties, formed more in admiration of particular teachers, than from any discrepancy of opinion, or contrariety of religious faith. For he immediately adds, in order that no one might evade his reproof, or repel his accusation; "*Now I say,*" or mean, by charging you with these contentions, "*that every one of you saith, I am (a disciple) of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ.*"—Nance's Address, p. 18.

† See Kettlewell, *Of Christian Communion to be kept in the Unity of Christ's Church, and among the Professors of Truth and Holiness*, Works II. p. 570. Bishop Sage's *Reasonableness of a Toleration*, 1705, a very accurate work, and well deserving of republication, with an

Church consists of similar parts, that is, of particular churches, each of them like to one another in frame and constitution. A particular church is an organized body. Every body (political as well as natural,) duly organized, has a *head*. On this head all the members must depend,—to it they must *adhere*,—with it they must be *united*, otherwise they cannot continue living members. Now I affirm, that in every particular church, a BISHOP, continuing in the unity of the Church Catholic, is this *head*. All the other members, whether subordinate officers or single christians, are bound in their respective stations to depend on him, to adhere to, and be subject to him.

The *union of the church* (Kettlewell, *On Christian Communion*, Works II. 270.) as one particular society which *schism* breaks, consists chiefly in keeping united to church heads and governors. Church rulers are the *heads*, which make the several parts one with another, or, as the scriptures sometimes speak, the *joints* and *ligaments*, which tie the respective members, and compact the whole body together. “*The whole body*” of the church (says St Paul,) “*is fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint,*” i. e. each pastor or church governor, “*supplies,*” (Eph. iv. 16.) And “*we are all the body of Christ and members in particular,*” as he says again, since we are under the same governors, which he has set over that body; having *in the church* set “*first, apostles,*” and after them the inferior orders, for the standing government and administration thereof, (1 Cor. xii. 27.)

alteration of the title. *Principles of Church Unity, in which is proved that Catholic Bishops are the Centre of Unity, and essential to a true Church,* by Matthias Earbery, *Presbyter of the Church of England*, Lond. 1716.

More particularly, the *heads of union* in any church societies are the Bishops in their respective churches. For, since the death of the original apostles, the Bishops are the chief spiritual heads, and the ordinary and permanent governors of Christ's Church. They, above all others, are those "*guides*" or "*rulers*," whom the members of the church are called on to "*remember and obey*," (Heb. xiii. 7. 17.) They are those angels of the churches, unto whom, as the heads thereof, our Lord directs himself, when he sends the letters to the churches, (Rev. ii.) and they stand as heads of the members of Christ, to unite them together under Him, the chief Bishop of the universal Church. So that they who adhere to the communion of their *orthodox* Bishop, and of those Presbyters who officiate under him, and by his permission, may be truly said to live in the communion of Christ's Catholic Church *. This was the unanimous opinion

* The necessity of living in the Bishop's communion will, I hope, sufficiently appear from the preceding pages; and consequently, the absurdity of the Independent or Congregational notion of a Church and Church Communion, viz. that the scriptures require men, as christians, merely to unite themselves to a single congregation, *independent* of the Bishop's authority. But, in confutation of this scheme, I have already shewn that all the congregations mentioned in scripture, were under the immediate inspection of the apostles, and that the Bishops succeed them in this office.

In order to support the Independent scheme, it is urged, that "Christ has promised his presence to *two or three met together in his name*," and this too without any mention of a Bishop's authority or superintendence."—But they must meet in Christ's name, that is, under his authority, and in obedience to his *laws and ordinances*, and consequently, in the fellowship of those church governors whom he has *appointed*. Indeed, should we maintain that this *single text* contains a *complete* description of a christian church, we must reject not only Bishops, but also Presbyters and Deacons, nay even

of the earliest fathers, who, in enforcing the great duty of unity on the primitive christians, enjoin them most expressly to adhere to their Bishops. "Take care all of you (says that blessed martyr Ignatius,) to

baptism and the eucharist, for none of these are mentioned in it ! Again they tell us, (Matt. xviii. 17.) that "*Christ has ordered that offences should be told to the church,*" by which they insist that he meant an *Independent* congregation. But why should it not rather be understood of a *Bishop* assisted by his Presbyters, determining matters of dispute in the presence of his *flock*,—since, in this very place, our Saviour gives his *apostles* (and in them their *successors*,) authority to excommunicate and pronounce absolution in such cases, (Matt. xviii. 18.—1 Cor. v. 3.—Rev. ii. 2. 8. 20.) The apostolic *practice* is certainly the best exposition of Christ's words, and according to this rule, we shall find that a congregation is not, and cannot be called a church, while independent of the Bishop's jurisdiction. See *Sherlock's Answer to Owen's Orig. of Churches*, in his *Def. of Stillingfleet*, p. 343.

Lastly, it has been lately maintained, that not only apostles, but even Presbyters are unnecessary in a church; for that "the apostles left without Elders (or Presbyters,) churches which they had planted in various places, (Acts xiv.) and did not ordain Elders among them till their return." But even supposing that these churches had, for a time, no Presbyters *resident* among them, (which is very improbable, see *Bishop Potter's Disc.* p. 101. 102.) it will not prove that there were none who acted for them in that capacity at all, for the apostles themselves acted in that capacity; and this will appear not to be inconsistent with their office, when we consider that all the inferior orders were included in theirs, (1 Pet. v. 1.—Acts. vi. 2.) To the formation of a church, Presbyters and Deacons are not so *necessary* as apostles or Bishops,—for these may lawfully exercise the functions of the former, but not *à contra*.

The jurisdiction and superintendence of the apostles, as I intimated above, was so very extensive, that no congregation in the Catholic Church was exempt from it. Thus Peter and John were sent to confirm the disciples at Samaria, (Acts viii. 14.) Paul "*went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches,*" (xv. 41.) "*sent to Ephesus, and called the Presbyters of the church,*" (xx. 17.) "*went*

follow the Bishop ;—wheresoever the Bishop appears, there let the multitude be with him.” “ As many as belong to God, and Jesus Christ, adhere to the Bishop,” says he in another place, exhorting them to

over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening the disciples,” (xviii. 23.—xx. 7.) gave “ *orders to the Churches of Galatia and Corinth,*” (1 Cor. xvi. 1.) “ *So ordain I in all churches,*” says he, (vii. 17.) and again declares that he had “ *the care of ALL the churches,*” (2 Cor. xi. 28.) In conjunction with Barnabas, he “ *confirmed the disciples at Antioch,*” (Acts xi. 23. 26.) “ *and at Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch,*” &c. (xiv. 22. 23. 28.) visited their brethren “ *in every city,*” where they had preached, (xv. 36.) This universal jurisdiction they committed to their successors in the same office, (1 Tim i. 3. v. 17.—1 Cor. iv. 17.—1 Thess. iii. 2.—Heb. xiii. 23.—Tit. i. 5.—2 Cor. viii. 23.) and was the undoubted doctrine and practice of the primitive Bishops. Thus Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch (in the beginning of the second century,) admonishes the christians of Smyrna, “ that nothing relating to church affairs should be done without the Bishop’s permission,” and that the “ eucharist is to be esteemed valid, when celebrated by the Bishop, or by one appointed by him.” See *Burscough on Schism*, p. 77.

From thence we may reasonably conclude, that what are now denominated independent churches were entirely unknown in the apostolic age,—and that such, even professing the pure faith and worship, would not then have been recognised as christian churches. For, to a perfectly formed church, there are required *generally* the orders of Presbyters and Deacons, but *indispensably* and *in all cases*, that of apostle or Bishop. Accordingly the Church at Philippi is defined by St Paul to be “ *the Saints at Philippi with the Bishops and Deacons,*” (Phil. i. 1.) Here we have the Deacons and Presbyters (then called Bishops,) with the christian people, acknowledging the authority of St Paul, with whom Timothy is united as partaking of the same authority;—and such is the form of a perfectly constituted church. Thus likewise was “ *the Church which was in*” or “ *at Jerusalem*” constituted, (Acts xi. 22. viii. 1. xxi. 17. 18. xv. 4.) and also “ *the Church of Ephesus,*” (Rev. ii. 1.—Acts xx. 17.)

In short, the absolute necessity of living in the communion of the apostles and their successors the Bishops, was the unanimous

union, and warning them against schism *. Now, if christian love and unity be so necessary a duty of christianity, what must the evil of schism be, which rends the seamless coat of Christ, and divides his church into so many little parties and factions ? Indeed there is the greatest reason to ask this question at present, when we observe with what little consideration most christians engage in it,—how wantonly they forsake the communion of the church, as if it were perfectly indifferent whether they come to church, or go to a conventicle,—as if it were no more than to leave their own parish church and go to another, where there is a preacher whom they like better. It is plain, that such men as these never understood what christian unity is, nor ever considered the guilt and danger of schism ; that is, they have not acted honestly and sincerely in a matter of such vast importance.

To explain away the sin of schism, it is argued, that “as there were schisms among the Corinthians, when it does not appear that there was any separation,—so

opinion of the first and purest ages of the church ; and I defy our adversaries to adduce, in those ages, a single instance of a congregation independent of a Bishop’s jurisdiction, and esteemed as *christian* by any cotemporary writer. The following quotation, from Bishop Wilson’s *Charge to his Clergy* in 1721, clearly expresses the real Catholic sentiment on this head : I think it absolutely necessary to put you in mind of the authority with which God hath invested the Bishops of his Church ; that if any attempts should be made to lessen that authority, or to make the *clergy* or *laity independent* of their *Bishop*, you may see the danger of closing with such designs, which would effectually ruin all order in the church, and *separate you from Christ*. See his *Life* prefixed to his *Works*.

* *Ignatii Epist. ad Eph.* Edit. Voss. p 21. *ad Philad.* p. 43. *ad Smyrn.* p. 6. *Cypriani Opera*, Epist. 33. 59. 66. *Kettlewell’s Works*, Vol. II. p. 570.

there may be a separation where there is no schism ; because christians may still be united in heart and affection, though they perform the offices of religion in different places and in different ways."

With respect to the first part of this objection, it must be acknowledged that the christians of Corinth were not divided into different or opposite communions. The schisms mentioned by the apostle, were not more than misunderstandings, debates, and discordant opinions among them ; but yet even these, according to the apostle, were extremely reprehensible, and of bad tendency ; "*For are ye not carnal,*" says he, "*for there is among you envying, strife, and division,*" &c. (1 Cor. iii. 8. 4.) If then schism was considered by St Paul of so heinous a nature, while confined to the communion of the church, what shall we think of it when broken out into open separation ? When the mutiny has broken out into open rebellion, must it not be much more reprehensible ? To suppose it less, is to contradict the reason of things ; as if it should be argued, that because we may hurt a man without killing him, therefore we may kill a man without hurting him. But although we cannot give examples from scripture, of schismatical churches established under separate pastors, (for schism had not yet made so great a progress as to form regular societies, professing the true faith and worship, in opposition to the apostles' fellowship,) yet, if all the faithful are *obliged* to live in external communion as visible members of the same body, then such a division in the body as causes a *breach* of that communion, must be *criminal*. Such divisions St Paul foresaw would be formed among christians ; and when he desires the Romans "*to mark them that cause divisions,*

and avoid them," he may very properly be understood to condemn all causeless separations of whatsoever nature, and consequently schisms, in the ecclesiastical sense of the word, as one of the worst and most mischievous species of division. Indeed, wherever concord is recommended and dissension condemned in the New Testament, there all separation of communion, when no sinful terms are required, must be supposed to be condemned also; particularly in John xviii. 20. 21. where Christ prays that his church may be one, "*that the world may know that God has sent him;*" unity of *communion* must be included in the unity he there prays for, because it is more *visible*,—and therefore, to the generality of men, a more striking proof of Christ's mission than *internal* love, which may be counterfeited when it is not real, and may be concealed for a long time where it exists*.

As for the second pretence, that "christians of *opposite* sects may be united in heart and affection," we ought to consider how preposterous it is to suppose, that if we sow in *schism* we shall reap in *unity*, or, in other words, that if we murder and mangle the body of the church, we shall preserve charity, which is the life and soul of it. By carefully examining the scriptures we shall find, that one great object in the establishment of the church, was to unite men by the bond of *charity* in constant *communion* with God and *each other*; and that the grand reason why schism is so pointedly condemned is, because it is entirely destructive of that charity and love so frequently and

* See *A Friendly Address to the English-Ordained Episcopal Clergy in the Diocese of Edinb. with Strictures on Schism and Heresy, in answer to Professor Campbell's Dissertations, by Dr Drummond, late Bishop of Edinburgh, Lond. 1789.*

so strictly enjoined *, and which greatest of virtues is always recommended in conjunction with faith and obedience. It is impossible that a catholic spirit of universal *charity*, and amicable fellowship, can be kept up among those of different *sects* and persuasions in religion. This we all know from experience. On the contrary, the *unity* of the christian church will as certainly lead to a catholic spirit of *good-will* and amicable fellowship, as does the division of it to the opposite disposition; and consequently the more attention that is paid to the unity of the christian church, considered as a society of divine institution, the more of true

* John xiii. 34. 35. xvii. 21.—Eph. iv. 3. 15. 16. v.—1 Cor. xiii. Christian love and charity must be such a love as is visible to all men, and may distinguish christians from all other sects and professions of men. “*By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another.*” Nothing can do this, but that christianity which unites christians into *one* communion; for those who *refuse* to worship God together, can never be *known* to be the disciples of the same master,—unless you can persuade the world to believe, that Christ instituted as many several ways of worship, as there are schisms and divisions in the church. It cannot be the *bare loving* one another, which makes men christians, for we see heathens and publicans, and the vilest sinners, love one another; but it is loving one another in the *communion* of the christian church, (1 Cor. xii. 25. 26.) See *Dr Sherlock's Def. of Stillingfleet*, p. 184. —An *external visible unity* of the church (says a late Presbyterian writer,) which is best seen in the unity of her government, worship, discipline, and *external communion*, is not to be despised,—but should be *eagerly sought after*, for the sake of promoting the *internal unity* of the church, or that great end, the edification of the body of Christ. *Nicholson's Letters*, Belfast, 1810, p. 20. I hope this author will attend to what he says, p. 79. “We should beware of entertaining any *particular* notions concerning *church government*, which might render us *schismatical* churches, *divided from the church universal.*”

christian faith and charity will be found in the world, (Eph. iv. 15. 16.) “ I thought once (said that noted nonconformist, Mr Baxter,) that all that talk about schism and sects, did but vent their malice against the best christians under these names. But since then, I have seen what love-killing principles have done, I have long stood by while churches have been divided and subdivided, one congregation of the division labouring to make the other contemptible and odious, and this called the preaching of the truth, and the purer worshipping of God.”

Besides the grievous sin of schism, there is also a farther disadvantage attending it, as I mentioned before, viz. The obvious danger of losing the benefit of God's *ordinances* for our salvation, as a limb severed from the body loses the life of the body. The promises of the gospel are exclusively directed to the faithful, the obedient, and the charitable members of Christ's one apostolic church ; and those who lightly separate themselves from this church, and yet hope for salvation, must hope without promise and without scripture. * For they who leave the church are no more in communion with Christ its head, nor have any better title to the privileges of the church, than they who were never admitted into it. We find in the natural body, that whatever member is cut off from the

* *Archbishop Potter on Church Gov.* p. 17.—One reason why the gospel has confined salvation to the communion of the church, and threatened such severe punishment against schism, may be (since the church is not armed with any secular *coercive* power,) to make her *authority* sacred and venerable, that no man should dare to divide her communion, or separate from her Bishops and Pastors without great and necessary reason.—Infallibility, whether real or pretended, cannot secure a church against schisms and separations.

body, does as entirely lose all the life and motion which is imparted from the natural head, as if it had never been a part of that body ; and in all civil corporations, they who renounce their freedom, do by consequence forfeit all the privileges to which that gave them a title ; neither can it be otherwise in this spiritual society, but that whoever does without cause separate himself from it, must be deprived of the privileges which his admission entitled him to, "*as not holding the head, from which all the body by joints and bands, having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.*" This is also confessed to have been the constant doctrine of the primitive church, that, to use St Austin's words, "Whoever is separated from the Catholic Church, however worthy of praise he may think that he lives in other respects, yet by reason of this wickedness alone, that he is disjoined from the unity of Christ's church, shall not have life, but the wrath of God abideth in him." *Aug. Epist.* quoted in Potter, *ut supra*. Moreover, there is yet a farther *evil* in separation, viz. that the common cause of christianity suffers, when the church is deprived of men who are otherwise good and virtuous. Our loss is double, when they who should be for us are against us ; and the characters of such being specious, are held up to the world, as a proof that schism is no sin.

I shall perhaps be called upon to state, whether I would set up an *absolute* authority in the church ;—whether I would contend that, under no circumstances whatever, a man may *lawfully separate* from church communion ? Undoubtedly there may be circumstances which will not only excuse, but justify such a separation. But then, whenever such a separation

takes place, there must be guilt somewhere. If he who separates is innocent and justifiable, then he who has so acted as to oblige his brother to separate from him, is the person guilty and liable to punishment. In short, when any *sinful* things are imposed on us by any society of christians, as the condition of our communion, we are then to "*obey God rather than man,*" and "*come out from among them and be separate,*" since an union on unlawful terms is a combination against God and his truth; and it is on this account that Protestants rejected the communion of the Roman Church.

But let it be carefully recollected, that nothing but *sinful terms* of communion can *justify* separation from a church; and that to separate upon little piques, uncertain scruples, and blind prejudices, is a very great and dangerous sin against the gospel; it is a manifest violation of the laws of union, and an open rebellion against Christ's authority in his church.

When the teaching or direction of the guides of any church appears, not in the mere private opinion of the party, but upon *evident and substantial reasons*, to be contrary to the revealed will of God, it can no longer be a proper rule of duty; in such case the member of the church exercises the right of private judgment. Upon this subject, we make the revealed will of God the sole standard of judgment, and call for no submission to the clergy that may be proved to be incompatible with it; but in *doubtful* cases, upon which a difference of opinion prevails, we claim that degree of *deference* to the determination of the appointed guides and teachers of the church, which a respect for their station demands, and the end for which their office was instituted, absolutely requires.

CHAP. V. .

THE REFORMED EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN ENGLAND, IRELAND, AND SCOTLAND, A SOUND AND ORTHODOX PORTION OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH; AND THE NECESSITY OF A STRICT ADHERENCE TO ITS COMMUNION.

HAVING now explained at large the nature of the Catholic Church, and the necessity of living in her communion, I proceed next to prove, that the Society of Christians in England, Ireland, and Scotland, which adheres to the communion of the Reformed Bishops in those respective countries, is a sound and orthodox portion of the Catholic Church.—In order to establish this point, I shall examine the terms of her communion, and prove that she retains the marks or notes of the Catholic Church (as laid down in the first chapter,) viz. the essentials of *Apostolic* Faith, Worship, and Government, and imposes no unlawful or sinful terms of communion upon her members; and consequently that it is the duty not only of her own members to hold constant communion with her, but also that of the members of other Protestant assemblies, to *unite* themselves to her, in order to partake of those spiritual blessings, which (as I have shewn,) are exclusively promised to the *faithful* and *obedient* members of Christ's Catholic Church.

I do not intend to speak of the terms, upon which persons are to be admitted to the exercise of the functions of the ministry,—but only of the terms of *lay-communion*, that is, those which are necessary for all persons, to join in her prayers, and sacraments,

and other offices of divine worship. And this must be carefully attended to, for there has been a great deal of art used to confound these two,—and I dare say, a great occasion of all our separation, has arisen from the not understanding the difference of these two cases. For although subscriptions and declarations required of ministers, may, in some instances, operate so powerfully on the mind, as to discourage a man from entering into holy orders; yet it ought not to be inferred from thence, that the people cannot join in our public worship with a good conscience.

I. With respect to **Faith**, the Reformed Episcopal Church in England, Ireland, and Scotland, maintains, that man is a fallen, depraved, and ruined creature; that he is involved in guilt, pollution, and misery, in a state of spiritual bondage, from which he has neither power nor will to extricate himself. But she exhibits the great deliverer in all his glorious excellence and sufficiency to save. She lays the foundation of our hope and confidence in his incarnation, obedience, sacrifice, and intercession. She requires us to worship him as our Lord and our God, to renounce every other plea, and to make mention of his name, his blood, and his righteousness *alone*, both for our present and final acceptance. She teaches, that we are justified only by the merits of Christ's death and sacrifice, as the only expiation and atonement for our sins. That no works of righteousness which we can do, can make satisfaction to God for our sins, nor merit eternal life, which is the gift of God. That no impenitent unreformed sinner, though he profess to believe in Christ, and be baptised into his church, shall be saved by him; and therefore, though repentance and a holy life do not merit the pardon of sin, nor eternal re-

wards, yet they are necessarily required in all those who shall be forgiven and saved by Christ. She therefore warns the professed believer, that the sincerity of his faith must be evinced by good works, (Art. xii.) and therefore calls upon him to abound in all the fruits of righteousness, as the only sure way to ascertain and prove his dependence upon Christ, and his spiritual union with him. To this end she introduces to our view the gracious interposition and almighty aid of another divine agent, the Holy Ghost; and exhorts us that prayer be ever made unto him, that by his influences, all her children may be renovated, sanctified, and preserved,—and that by increasing measures of his grace, they may daily be growing in a meetness for the heavenly kingdom.

The excellency of the church with respect to her doctrines, appears in this, that she looks upon “the holy scriptures as containing all things necessary to salvation, (2 Tim. i. 13. iii. 16. 17.—Jude iii.) So that whatever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation,” (Art. vii.) And therefore (says Bishop Beveridge,) in order to your “*continuing stedfastly*,” as the first christians did, “*in the apostles’ doctrine*,” the surest way is to keep close to the doctrine of our church, which is plainly the same with that of the apostles in all points; by which means, as our minds may be enlightened, and our hearts purified by that faith which was once delivered to the saints,—so we are secured from falling into any damnable heresy, and from being corrupted or perplexed with any of those new and dangerous opinions, which the ignorance and superstition of after

ages have brought into the church. And let it be recollected, that the grand doctrines of the church are not to be gathered from any private sentiments and interpretations of individuals,—not from this or that preacher or commentator,—but from her own authorised forms, her catechism, her creeds, her articles, and her homilies.

It is alleged by some, that “although the church professes in her articles the *doctrines* of the gospel, yet the clergy do not preach them,” and on this pretence many have separated from the church. When we hear such barefaced assertions, as that the gospel is not preached in our congregations, who would not suppose that the name of Christ was never mentioned among us, and that our clergy were all heathens or deists? But it is urged that “they preach on *moral* subjects.” This I admit, and they are right in doing so, whenever they think necessary; and in this they have the example of our Saviour and his apostles, who enjoined to the first christians the observance of moral duties. It is again replied, “that they place man’s hope of salvation on his moral performances.” To this I answer, that the discourses of the present clergy do not justify, generally speaking, this serious charge. They preach, I trust, “*Christ crucified*,” (1 Cor. i. 23.) as the foundation of the christian building, and “*other foundation can no man lay*,” (1 Cor. iii. 11.) They look, generally speaking, to the Cross, as to fallen man’s only hope and only title to salvation.—But, it being the office of the christian ministry rightly to divide the word of truth, they are not always haranguing on one or two points of the gospel, to the neglect of others, which they think of no importance to their hearers: they give to every part the portion

of attention, which its relative importance, and the opinions and circumstances of their hearers demand, blending faith with practice, and the doctrinal with the practical part of christianity. Indéed, should any minister of the church be so presumptuous, as to rest man's hopes of salvation on his moral performances, I allow that he does *not* preach the gospel, that he is in reality a wolf in sheep's clothing, and that all lawful methods should be used, to procure his deposition from the ministerial office *.

Should this remedy fail in any instance, yet still the parishioners may take great care of their souls, and live in the apostles' doctrine, without separating from the church ; and in such a case may be more secure in the church's communion, than they can be out of it. —It is melancholy to admit the possibility, that any thing but the truth, and the whole truth of the doctrine of God our Saviour should be delivered by those who have *subscribed* their hands thereto ; but if the fact cannot be denied, it is a consolatory reflection, that the people in such a case *necessarily hear* the word of truth. They are sure to have the genuine doctrines of the gospel, in the daily appointed service

* *Salvation by grace*, in its proper and scriptural sense, will always, I trust, be preached in the church. It is the doctrine of the church, and woe be to those ministers who preach it not ! *Daubeny's Guide*, II. p. 510.—We have, in fact, lost many of our people to sectaries, by not preaching in a manner *sufficiently evangelical*. *Archbishop Secker's Charges*, p. 299.—To preach practical sermons, i. e. sermons upon virtues and vices (says the late Bishop Horne,) without inculcating those great scripture truths of *redemption, grace, &c.* which *alone* can *incite* and *enable* us to forsake sin, and follow after righteousness, what is it but to put together the wheels, and set the hands of a watch, forgetting the spring which is to make them all go. *Life of Bishop Horne by the Rev. W. Jones*, p. 376. 1799.

of the church ; for, in this they have an opportunity of hearing large portions of the word of God read to them at every season of public worship, and devout and pious prayers in a language which they understand; and in these truly evangelical petitions, every devout supplicant may read his duty and the motives of his duty. Indeed it argues no great opinion of the *sufficiency* of the scriptures, our *only* rule of faith, to speak so meanly of the ordinary service of the church, in which the scriptures are daily read, and the principal doctrines of faith piously and judiciously explained in the catechism and homilies ; and surely people, who have such advantages as these, are not in such a desperate state for their souls. At the beginning of the reformation, this was esteemed a singular blessing, and would be so still, did men either understand what kind of preaching was used in the church in the early ages, or took not more pleasure in gratifying a *wanton curiosity*, than in saving their souls. So that even supposing a clergyman to be insufficient in this respect, there is no absolute necessity for his congregation to forsake the communion of the church.

II. The second mark of an apostolic church is, to profess the essentials of christian WORSHIP; and this strictly applies to the Reformed Episcopal Church. For she teaches us to invoke the one eternal God, through the one mediator Jesus Christ,—to acknowledge and adore the eternal majesty of the adorable Trinity, by continually ascribing glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost,—to humble ourselves before God with deepest contrition and self-abhorrence,—and to deprecate his wrath, as those who deserve to perish, “O Lord have mercy upon us, mi-

serable sinners." Her sacraments (viz. baptism and the Lord's supper,) and other ordinances are likewise in essentials, in strict conformity to the commands of Christ, and the precepts or practice of his apostles; and her members need not have the least doubt of the validity of her preaching and sacraments, for they are "duly ministered" by clergy who have received their sacred commission in regular succession from the apostles themselves.

Now, is there any thing which may prevent any true Protestant from joining in the public prayers of the Reformed Episcopal Church? May they not partake in the public worship, without partaking in any thing *sinful*? This I shall now examine, putting the reader in mind of the grand rule of Catholic unity, that nothing can justify a separation from the church, but something absolutely *sinful*, and which may *tend* to endanger the salvation of those who partake in it. For St John assures us, that nothing is sinful, but what is a transgression of the law of God, (1 John iii. 4.) but the rules of our church require nothing of them that is a transgression of God's law; and therefore they require nothing that is sinful.

The principal thing objected to in the church, is prescribing a Form of Prayer to be constantly used in divine worship*; but surely no person will say that it is *unlawful*.

As for the lawfulness of a form, we have the practice of our Saviour and his apostles, who joined in the Jewish worship, where a set form was used. Christ also taught his disciples to pray by a form, "*When ye pray, say, Our Father,*" &c. and although we should

* See Bennet's *History of Set Forms*, 1708,—his *Discourse of Joint Prayer*,—and his *Two Letters to B. Robinson*.

suppose that they were not always bound to use it, it plainly proves that the christian religion does not *forbid* praying by a form. They are almost universally used in all reformed churches, as the Reformed Episcopal Church in Germany, Bohemia, Sweden, Denmark, America, &c. and also in the Protestant churches of Holland, France, and in many of our Dissenting congregations; and the ministers of the Kirk of Scotland, it is said, are not unwilling to use them in their meetings, but “are afraid that the *prejudices* of the people would not bear the introduction of them.”—See *Christian Observer*, Oct. 1809.

Let us now consider the manner of performing public worship in those congregations where no form is used. By this means we shall easily perceive how much they conduce to promote devotion. In these, there is no public form either of confession, prayer, or thanksgiving; consequently the congregation have not the opportunity to join in the worship of God; they are hearers only; it is the minister (so called,) who prays, and not the people, it being scarce possible for them to join in petitions, or to lift up their voice with “*one accord*” in the celebration of praises which they are unprepared to accompany, because ignorant of what may be uttered. How great soever therefore the fervour and devotion on the part of the minister may be, and how acceptable soever his form of prayer (if the public prayer of any *self-appointed* minister may be acceptable at the throne of grace,) the congregation nevertheless, in consequence of their being little concerned in the service performed, can in reason have little to expect from their attendance. But this is their error, viz. they think it is their minister’s business to pray, and theirs to sit or stand and listen to

him. Thus they regard a prayer in the same manner they do a sermon, expecting instruction and entertainment from it.

In the public worship of God in the church, the congregation may all become actual partakers, and may join in the solemn sacrifice of prayer and thanksgiving, with humble, penitent, and contrite hearts, and, in the words of David, "*worship, and bow down, and kneel before the Lord their maker;*" the service performed consequently is what it ought to be, the joint service both of minister and people,—all sinners before God, all supplicants for pardon, all petitioners for blessings. Besides, in the church service there is no danger of such unwary expressions, arising from confusion or incoherent conceptions, as may degrade the solemnity of prayer, or insult the majesty of heaven, by offering up prayers to the throne of grace in a confused and unprepared manner. "*Be not rash (says Solomon,) with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter any thing before God.*"

But there is this further consideration attached to an established form of prayer in preference to any other, namely, the promise of favourable attention being paid to it by the Deity,—"*If two of you (says our Lord,) shall agree upon earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven,* (Matt. xviii. 19.) It is to this agreement in prayer, that denominates our public worship. *Common Prayer*, that Christ has promised his presence: for how can two or three, that is, a congregation of christians, agree together in what they shall ask, except they ask in a set form, which they are all acquainted with before the prayer is offered, in order that all may know what petitions are to be made?—

Yet this is the case of those who meet together, to hear an extempore prayer, which not one of them knows one petition of beforehand, except the speaker himself, if *he* does.

It is a very prevalent objection to a liturgy, that “the constant repetition of the same prayers tends to deaden the devotion of the worshippers.” I confess, indeed, that if the attention, which ought to be exercised in prayer, were only an attention to what another speaks (and not what it really is, an attention to ourselves, and not to another person,) then the repeated use of the same prayers would create dulness, and cause the minds of the congregation to wander. And this is the fault of Dissenters, who generally regard a prayer with the same sort of attention they do a sermon, and expect from the one the same sort of instruction or entertainment that they look for from the other; which the perpetual repetition of the same prayer not affording, they are disgusted at it, and naturally fall into a drowsy attention to it. Whereas if they would lay aside all expectation of having their judgments informed, or their imaginations entertained and diverted by the prayers of the church, and look for nothing in them but a representation of the real wants and desires of a christian to almighty God, in proper and suitable expressions, the frequent rehearsal of them would not be such a weariness, and they would join in them with great devotion and delight. Moreover, if it were in the nature of a form, as such, to cause a coldness and indifference in the use of it, all forms, those of divine as well as of human composition, and therefore the Lord’s prayer, the psalms of David, and even the holy scriptures, would have that effect. But who will presume to fix that imputation on them?

These considerations are sufficient to shew the expediency of performing the public worship by a form of prayer, which being deliberately composed by men, eminent for knowledge and abilities, must be a great relief against the insufficiency or imprudence of those who officiate,—and, being previously known, may readily be joined in by every christian, without fear of being misled by the minister.

As for the Liturgy, or Book of Common Prayer of the Reformed Episcopal Church, one would be apt to think (says Archbishop Hort,) that it should be no small recommendation of it, that many of the first compilers of it suffered as martyrs for the Protestant faith; and as for the exceptions that have been made against it, the most that can be urged are some supposed *inconveniences*, which, if we would grant to be real, cannot make our communion *unlawful*; and then, as I have intimated, it must be a sin to separate from it; and we may not commit a sin to decline an inconvenience; this would be “*to do evil, that good may come of it.*” These objections I shall briefly examine*.

The liturgy may be divided into two parts, viz.—The Ordinary Sunday Service, and the Occasional Offices of Baptism, Confirmation, &c.

1. As for the Sunday service, some object to Bodily Worship; but for this we find an express command,

* See *The Lawfulness of Conformity*, in answer to *Owen's Plain Dealing*, and *Lay Nonconf. justified*, 1717. *Grey's Answer to Palmer's Vind. of the Dissenters*, 1720. *Bishop King on the Inventions of Men in the Worship of God*, in the *London Cases*; and his *Two Admonitions against Boyse and Craghead*. *Hart's Answer to Gill's Reasons*, 1801. *Woodward's Causes and Pretences for Separation Examined*, 1802. *Hoadly's Reasonableness of Conformity*, and his *Defences of do. against Calamy*.

(Psalms xcv. 6.) "*O come let us worship, and bow down, and kneel before the Lord our maker.*" And that this is meant of public worship is evident from the second verse, "*Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving.*" Agreeably to this, St Paul expressly commands us to "*glorify God in our Body and in our Spirit,*" (1 Cor. vi. 20. xiv. 25.) We find in scripture some act of this bodily worship accompanying every religious performance. Thus prayers are generally offered *kneeling*, and that so constantly that "to bow the knee" in scripture language is to pray, (Luke xxii. 41.—Acts vii. 60. xxi. 5. xxii. 36.—Eph. iii. 14.) And praises, thanksgivings, and confessions are offered *standing*, (1 Kings viii. 14.—2 Chron. xxix. 26.—Neh. xii. 40. ix. 5.—Rev. vii. 9.) In conformity to this, our church directs us to stand up at praises, thanksgivings, and confessions of faith; and at confessions of sin, and at prayers, to present ourselves before God on our knees. It is observed by a Dissenter, (in the *Monthly Repository*, 1807, p. 629.) that "the praying attitude in the New Testament is always a kneeling one; and that Dr Enfield (a Dissenting teacher,) judging of the propriety of an humble posture in a creature when addressing his God, as well as of the beneficial use of liturgies, for enabling the congregation to take a requisite share in the devotions with the minister, had introduced into his meeting-house prayer books and hassocks for kneeling."—Bowing at the name of Jesus is piously enjoined by the eighteenth canon of the English Church, to "testify by these outward ceremonies and gestures, that inward humility, christian resolution, and due acknowledgment, that the Lord Jesus Christ, the true eternal Son of God, is the only Saviour of the world, in whom alone all the mercies,

graces, and promises of God to mankind for this life, and the life to come, are fully and wholly comprised." It is not *required* of the people by the canons of the Irish Church.—In the Athanasian Creed all that is required of us, as *necessary to salvation*, is explained in the third and fourth verses, but all that follows from hence to the twenty-sixth verse is only brought as an illustration of it ; and therefore no more requires our assent, than a sermon does, which is made to prove and illustrate a text. The text is the word of God, and therefore necessary to be believed ; but no person is, for that reason, bound to believe every particular of the sermon deduced from it, upon pain of damnation, though every tittle of it may be true. All the rest of the creed, from the twenty-seventh verse to the end, relates to our Saviour's incarnation, &c. which are essentials of the faith, and as necessary to be believed as the former part of it. [This explanation is fully vindicated in Dr Bennet *on the Common Prayer*, p. 262. where he clearly proves that the belief of the Procession is not necessary to salvation, and that in the use of this creed we do not condemn the Greek Church.]—Although the greater part of the Old Testament is ordered to be read over *once* in every year, and the New Testament *thrice* (the revelation excepted,) and although there is more canonical scripture read in our congregations in any two months (even though we should except the psalms, epistles, and gospels,) than in a whole year in the largest Dissenting meeting, yet we are charged with "making a bad selection of lessons," and especially of "appointing the apocrypha to be read, as if of equal authority with scripture." But the church has expressly declared (Art. vi.) "That she reads those books

only for example of life and instruction of manners, but doth not apply them to establish any doctrine." Nor is there any Sunday in the whole year that has any of its lessons taken out of the apocrypha. And is it really unlawful to read in a public religious assembly, any uninspired writings? Why then do some of the Dissenting teachers read to their congregations written sermons? Or, if they preach without notes, is not what they deliver a *human* composition and *uninspired*? As for some relations in the apocryphal books that are pretended to be fabulous, see Falkner's *Libertas Ecclesiastica*, p. 164. and Bennet, *ut supra*.

Kneeling at the Eucharist we consider more agreeable to the primitive institution than any other posture. At the paschal supper our Saviour and his disciples used a table posture; but in what posture the apostles received the eucharist at its institution, is uncertain; but we may probably conjecture that they received it in a posture of *adoration*. For it is plain that our Saviour, who was always remarkable for outward reverence in devotion, gave thanks for the bread and wine in an adoring posture; and we cannot but conclude that the disciples joined with our Saviour in those prayers, and therefore used the same posture: and there is great reason to suppose that they remained in that posture while receiving the eucharist. Consequently the church very wisely appoints kneeling, which with us is the most solemn posture of adoration. Nay, though it were granted that the adoring posture used at the institution was standing, yet still it was an *adoring*, and not a *table* posture, as Dissenters contend. Palmer pretends that kneeling "looks greatly like the adoration of the elements, and took its rise from transubstantiation," (*Diss. Catech.* p. 57.)

and Doddridge is of the same opinion, (*Lect.* II. p. 400,) although the church has expressly declared that "no adoration is thereby intended," and that "it would be *idolatry* to be abhorred by all faithful christians." See Dr Bennet's *Paraphrase*, p. 302. and the *London Cases*, III. p. 174. where it is shewn that kneeling was used long before transubstantiation was heard of.—For the lawfulness of Instruments in the praises of God, see Psalms, cl. 3.—Exod. xv. 20.—Rev. v. 8. and xiv. 2. Organs are not required by any rule of our church, and therefore it is the people's choice whether they will use the help of them or not.

2. The Occasional Offices.—In these the principal things objected to are: That in the office of baptism children are said to "be regenerated, and grafted into the body of Christ's Church." So in scripture we are said by baptism to be made members of Christ's body, "*by one spirit we are all baptised into one body,*" (1 Cor. xii. 13.) And baptism is called the washing of regeneration, and is joined with the renewing of the Holy Ghost, (Tit. iii. 5.—Acts ii. 38.) But then it must be observed that many who are baptised prove false to their engagements in baptism, and forfeit their interest in the blessings of the baptismal covenant: For does not the scriptures suppose that we may quench the Spirit? And that we may grieve the holy Spirit, whereby we are sealed (alluding probably to our receiving it in baptism,) unto the day of redemption. See also Heb. vi. 4. 6.

The Cross made on the child's forehead after baptism is not designed as an act of worship to God, but is done "in token that hereafter he shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified."—Although the objections to this have been repeatedly

answered, yet the same outcry is still made, that "to use this sign in baptism is to make a sacrament of it, according to the church's definition of a sacrament (as an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace,)" and moreover, that we "make it essential to the administration of baptism," (Palmer's *Diss. Catech.* p. 56. and Doddridge's *Lect.* I. 2.) But both these aspersions are notoriously false. How often must these sectaries be told that the sign of the cross neither is nor can be a sacrament, either upon our or their own principles. For it is agreed on both sides (indeed is expressly declared in the church's definition of a sacrament,) that nothing can be a sacrament, which is not *instituted by Christ*, as a *means to convey grace*. Now I appeal to our adversaries, whether our church ever pretended that the sign of the cross was instituted by Christ, as a means to convey grace. Consequently it cannot be a sacrament.—We do not make it *essential* to baptism, for in the 80th canon of the English Church, it is declared, "that it is no part of the substance of this sacrament, and that baptism is full, perfect, and satisfactory without it." If it be said that "the Papists" use this sign, and therefore it is unlawful, I answer, that the Papists repeat the apostles' creed and ten commandments. Is it therefore unlawful for us to do the same? The primitive christians, as Tertullian and others inform us, on every important occasion signed themselves with the cross on the forehead. And why is not the example of the primitive christians as good an argument for, as that of Papists is against the use of the cross. Besides, it is with us no condition of lay-communion, because the people are not required to sign with the cross, but the Priest only.

“But the parents are excluded from being Sponsors;” but are they excluded also from a full power; and released from their obligations to bring up their children well? No, surely; and where then is the fault of the church, in taking the best care she can, that several godly, wise, and grave christians shall either assist the parent in the education of the child, or, in case of the parent’s death or neglect, take the whole care of it on themselves? The pious Dr Bray assures us, he has known many instances of persons, who owe that understanding they have of religion and the fear of God, purely next under God, to the care of their godfathers and godmothers. If it be said, that godfathers and godmothers are frequently chosen without due care,—I answer, that the parents are to provide the sponsors; and if they are so careless about that great affair, who can help it? The fault is personal; and must be charged upon themselves, and not upon the church, which has made the most effectual provision she could.—As for the office of Confirmation, we are not said to be regenerated upon being able to say the catechism, &c. (as a sneering Dissenter insinuates,) but by water and the Holy Ghost in *baptism*.

The form of Absolution, in the office for visitation of the sick, even supposing that it relates to absolution from sins, yet must be understood *conditionally*; for it manifestly supposes that the person absolved does truly and heartily repent and believe in Christ; now of this the Priest cannot be absolutely certain, and therefore he absolves the sick person on condition that he is truly and heartily penitent. It is well known (affirms Bishop Wetenhall,) that divers of us have refused, and daily do, to absolve such persons, touching whose penitence we are not satisfied;—and this

he proves to be the sense of the rubric.—It is plain (says Dr Bennet,) that the Burial Office was never intended to be used at the burial of such persons as die in a state of notorious impenitence, and if any clergymen use it at the funeral of such, they act against the manifest design of the church. Yet still the office is capable of a very charitable construction.—There is no impropriety in saying that “it pleased God to take unto himself the soul of our brother,” (see Eccl. xii. 7.) The words “in *sure* and *certain* hope of *the* [not of *his*] resurrection to eternal life,” mean the *general* resurrection of all the dead; and by “eternal life,” we also mean eternal life in general, as the life everlasting in the creed implies. The “*hope*” that “our dear brother rests in Christ,” is expressive of hopeful resignation of the deceased into the hands of God. Yet should any clergyman through ignorance, use this office improperly, it can be no objection to lay-communion, since every lay-member is perfectly at liberty to be absent from any funeral he pleases*.

I have now examined the objections which have been brought against all the offices in the liturgy, and I am persuaded, that the most rigid Dissenter will not say there is any thing *sinful* in them; and it is only in the use of *some* of them that the *laity* are required to join. I am confident (says Bishop Grove,) that one man, without any great pains, may find more

* This office manifestly supposes the exercise of *Church Discipline*. I wish with all my heart (observes Dr Sherlock,) that some expressions were altered, to prevent any scandal to the scrupulous or to the profane; or, which is more desirable, that *discipline* were *revived*, which would soon answer all these objections. *Defence of Stillingfleet* p. 103.

things really exceptionable in any prayer made occasionally and extempore by the ablest of the opposite party, than the several parties of Dissenters have been able to discover in the church service for more than 100 years. And yet some of our brethren, that seek industriously for scruples in the common prayer, will readily join in other sudden conceived prayers without any scruple; when they cannot tell, but that there may be some dangerous heresy in every sentence, and some great indecencies and absurdities in every word. This is such partiality and unfair dealing as cannot easily be excused.

There still remain a few popular objections to the Liturgy, the unreasonableness of which I beg leave to point out. The grand argument made use of to terrify the minds of the ignorant, and prejudice them against our worship is, that "it is Popish, and that the common prayer is taken out of the mass book."—Never (says Dr Trapp, an excellent writer against Popery,) was any charge more absurd, as well as odious and invidious. We have rejected every thing that is unlawful in the Church of Rome, every thing that is contrary either to scriptures or to primitive christianity,—and that, one would think, should be sufficient. For if every thing be Popery which the Papists do, then it is Popery to pray, and to preach, and to administer the sacraments,—nay it is Popery to eat and drink as well as to use the cross in baptism, and to wear any clothes at all as well as to wear a surplice. Will it not be enquired (says a convert from Popery) whether I be not gone from Popery to Popery, it being objected, that the constitutions of this church are framed out of Popery, and the common prayer taken from the mass book? I answer :—The devil

hath many devices to carry on his own interest, and the Papists contrive many engines to distract Protestants; and I look upon this objection to be hammered in their forge, to make us worry one another, and to break our communion. But let me tell you, that I think I understand the mass book better than any here, and I can assure you the argument is vain and unworthy: First, all is not Popery that is in the mass book; there are several parts of the primitive liturgy that is not Popery. There are places taken out of the Holy Bible, neither is that Popery.—Secondly, there are several other good things in the mass book; and if it were not so, the cheat would be evident to every eye. You know the devil tempted our Saviour in scripture language,—shall we therefore expunge these scriptures because the devil used them? The reformation quarrels not with the Church of Rome for any thing that is good, but what is really bad*.

The ceremonies in general, used in the worship of the Reformed Episcopal Church, have also been unreasonably charged with a close resemblance to those used in the Roman Church, both as to *number* and *quality*. But, in both respects, there is a material difference between them. The Roman Church has notoriously abused her *right*† of prescribing her own external forms of worship. Their worship (as Bishop Gibson observes,) is overcharged with a *vast variety* of superstitious rites, in which the true spirit of devotion is swallowed up and lost;—and our reformers had just occasion to complain, that “the great excess and multitude of them had increased so much (at the time of the reformation,) that the *burthen* of

* *Recantation Sermon of Anthony Egan, late Confessor-General of Ireland, Lond. 1673. p. 19.*

† See APPENDIX, No. I.

them was *intolerable*; that the *excessive multitude* of them was so great, and many of them so dark, that they did more confound and darken, than declare and set forth Christ's benefits unto us*." On the contrary, the ceremonies of the Reformed Episcopal Church are few in number, plain, grave, and manly. Indeed, if any church has been so judicious as to keep the golden mean, between loading the service of God with external forms on the one hand, and stripping it so bare on the other, as not to leave sufficient for the purposes of bodily worship and mental contemplation,—this church may justly lay claim to this distinction †.

* See the Advertisement before the common prayer, relating to ceremonies.—The Roman ceremonies are justly stigmatised by our reformers, as "serving more to *confound* and *darken*, than to *declare* and *set forth* Christ's benefits to us;" and this censure is, even still, perfectly applicable to them. To give a few instances from (what is called) *The Manual of Catholic Piety*, by Rev. J. Gahan, Dublin, 1804, Suppl. p. 45. "At the celebration of Mass, the priest bowing down before the altar, and saying the Confiteor, *represents* our Saviour loaded with the sins of mankind, prostrate at his prayers in the garden, and falling into a bloody sweat and most painful agony. The priest going up to the altar and kissing it, *represents* our Saviour going to meet his enemies, and receiving the treacherous kiss from Judas. When he goes to the book at the corner of the epistle, forms the sign of the cross, and reads the Introit, he *represents* our Saviour seized, bound, and led captive to the courts of Annas and Caiphas, where he was struck across the face, blindfolded, buffeted, spit upon, and treated with the greatest indignity by the servants of the High-priest." A truly *lively* representation! Their ceremonies (as Sir Edwin Sandys most justly observes) are so *childish* and *unsavoury*, that they argue great *silliness* and *rawness* in their inventors; so can they naturally bring no other than *disgrace* and *contempt* on those exercises of religion, wherein they are stirring.—*Europæ Speculum*, 1638, p. 3.

† There is but one ceremony retained by our church, which cannot be reckoned among the necessary circumstances of action, viz.

There is a farther and more important difference between the Reformed and the Roman ceremonies. The latter, after being appointed by the church, become *necessary parts* of worship, but the Reformed ceremonies are esteemed as things in their own nature *indifferent* and *changeable*, and appointed only for *decency* and *order*. Many of the Roman ceremonies are asserted, by the divines of that church, to have a purifying and cleansing faculty as to the souls of men, not for justification of men from mortal sins, but for other spiritual effects, and taking away the guilt of venial sins, (Bellarmin. *De Effect. Sacram.* Lib. II. 31.) But our church utterly rejects any such *spiritual efficacy*. In short, the Roman ceremonies are (what ours can never be proved to be,) for their *number* intolerable, and, for their *nature*, such as vilify, pollute, and deprave the worship of God. Hickes' *Sermons*.

I have now examined the objections which are commonly urged against the liturgy, and have given such a solution of them, as I think is sufficient to satisfy any conscientious mind. I hope, however, it will not be understood, that I consider the liturgy as absolutely perfect. It is a human composition, and there is nothing human that can claim so high a title as that of absolute perfection; and I agree decidedly with most of our eminent divines, that the liturgy is still capable of improvements. But yet, have we not abundant reason to be thankful for it? Let its excellencies be fairly weighed, and its blemishes will sink into nothing,—let its excellencies be duly appre-

that most expressive one, the Sign of the Cross, which (says Bishop Taylor,) as it is in compliance with the practice of all ancient churches, so it is very innocent in itself; and, being one and alone, is in no regard troublesome. *Ductor. Dubit.* Lib. III. Cap. 4.

ciated, and every person in the kingdom will acknowledge himself deeply indebted to those, who, with so much care and piety, compiled it.

III. Besides the pure Faith and Worship, the Reformed Episcopal Church retains also the essentials of Government, viz. the three distinct orders of BISHOPS, PRIESTS (or Presbyters,) and DEACONS. Under this government, we can be in no doubt of the validity of the ordination of ministers, or of the validity of the sacraments by them administered. For they have their orders by a continued succession from the ancients, and so from the apostles; which is the only ordinary way, that I know of, for a man to be commissioned to act in Christ's name. Dean Stanley.—And it is what the Episcopal Church chiefly glories in, that she is able to make out her claim to an uninterrupted succession of ordination from the apostles to these times; and, whoever asserts the contrary, only betrays his own ignorance in church history. Dr Wells.—Wherefore, if any one disaffected to our church shall ask a Presbyter or Deacon for his authority? his answer is ready,—I had it from my Bishop who ordained me, and admitted me to this particular ministry. From whence had he authority so to do? From such as were his predecessors in the same authority; and they from others, and so upwards, until we ascend to the apostles, who received their authority from Christ, the head of the church, the fountain of all church power. Clarke's *Consecration Sermon*, 1691*.

* The Popish objections against our ordinations have been confuted by *Bishop Burnet* in his *Vindication of the Ordinations*, &c. and by Messrs *Whitfield*, *Seller*, *Milbourne*, *Prideaux*, and *Browne*, in 1688. On the subject of the Nagahead Consecration (which

chair, and lead the business to prevent confusion, as in other assemblies. Thus St James Bishop of Jerusalem acted as Archbishop or Primate, in the first convocation held at that place, and gave sentence upon it.

Our adversaries will perhaps be surprised to hear, that I have not mentioned the Election of the Clergy by the people, as an essential of church government; for they expressly contend, that the "liberty of choosing their own pastors is the people's *inalienable* right," and that "*consent is essentially necessary to form the relation between pastors and people.*" Now I assert that the laity have no divine or inalienable right to choose either the persons that shall be ordained, or their respective pastors in particular; and therefore the people's consent is *not essential* or *inalienable* *.

For it is manifest from the manner in which elections were performed in the time of the apostles, that the people's consent was never considered as *essential*. Christ constituted his apostles and the seventy, without any imaginary appearance of a popular choice or approbation. Thus we see that the Catholic Church was founded upon governors and pastors ordained to rule over every part of it, before there was any formed congregation in the world to have a hand in it. Barnabas and Saul were chosen by the Holy Ghost; and the apostles were guided by it alone in choosing their successors, and never asked the people's advice whom they should ordain for pastors, "but (as St Clement says,) they constituted Bishops and ministers for such

* See *Bennet's Rights of the Clergy*, p. 128. *Sherlock's Def. Still.* p. 473 to 553. in answer to *Baxter, &c. Breviter's No Democracy in the Church*, Dub. 1735. *Dissenters Represented by T. Dorrington, late a Dissenting Teacher. Johnson's Clergyman's Vade Mecum*, pref. p. 59.

as (were not yet converted, but) should hereafter believe."

The choice and approbation of the clergy in Ephesus and Crete, were committed by St Paul to Timothy and Titus, (2 Tim. ii. 2.—Tit. i. 5.) and there is not the least direction given to either of them to call in the assistance, or wait the consent of the people; on the contrary, they had the strongest cautions given them against popular elections. For St Paul, instructing Timothy in the genius of the people of the province in which he had placed him, in plain terms foretels how they would one day act, if left to the liberty of choosing pastors for themselves: "*The time will come (says he,) when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts, shall heap up to themselves teachers, having itching ears,*" (2 Tim. iv. 3.) And that Titus had a caution to the same purpose, is evident from the character given of the Cretans by St Paul, as "*always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies,*" (Tit. i. 12.) This is meant of the members of the church, for Titus is ordered to "*rebuke them sharply, that they might be sound in the faith,*" which surely was to judge and censure them, for St Paul disowns his right of judging "*them that are without,*" (1 Cor. v. 12.) If the laity of the Cretan Church therefore had such a character given of them by the apostle himself, (which at least must affect a considerable part of them,) let any man judge what probability there is that Titus should have had instructions to let the people choose their pastors, or that he should take up that method himself in conferring holy orders in that island. From these particulars I conclude that the laity, in the time of the apostles, possessed no *divine* or *essential* right, either to elect those who were to be ordained, or their

respective pastors. Their duty towards the clergy is frequently inculcated. They are required to "*avoid false teachers and seducers*," and consequently they are commanded to adhere to the *orthodox* ministers of the gospel; but not a syllable of information is given concerning the election of them.

In succeeding ages, the Presbyters appointed to parishes were (with very few exceptions,) chosen by the Bishop, and whensoever the people were present at elections, it was chiefly in order to *attest* the piety and good behaviour of the persons to be promoted. In the Church of England and Ireland, the generality of the clergy are likewise appointed by the Bishops; but many are nominated by patrons. For in ancient times, to give greater encouragement to the building of churches in country places, the founder of any church, who settled an endowment on it, was allowed to retain the right of presentation to himself; but then the Bishop was to take care that the clergyman was qualified before he admitted him; and if the patron did not nominate one in a limited time, the presentation devolved to the Bishop, and so it continues to this day *. So that the right of patronage was at first founded upon a very reasonable consideration, and has been ever since received by as universal consent as any law among us.

* Suppose (says Dr Sherlock,) there be so many drunken patrons, as the Dissenters intimate, they can present none but *ordained* ministers; and if they be *not qualified* for such a charge, *it is the Bishop's fault* who ordains them, not the patron's who presents them. And if the Bishop be duly informed, that the person presented be either so vicious or ignorant, that he is not qualified for such a Cure, he may refuse to grant him institution, or may suspend or deprive him afterwards, and therefore the patron's presentation can do no injury, if other persons concerned *do their duty*.

In the primitive ages, the Bishops were in general chosen by the Presbyters of the cathedral where the deceased Bishop had presided, and the choice generally fell upon the eldest Presbyter of the cathedral, if qualified for the office; if not, the Presbyters of that church chose another out of their number; however it cannot be denied that in times of persecution, the people, upon extraordinary occasions chose their own Bishop, but in order to prevent the acts of violence and even of bloodshed, which were occasioned by these popular elections, the emperors were obliged to interpose, and nominate the Bishops themselves. And it is true, that the people's *approbation* has always been thought so far necessary, that when hands were to be laid on any for their admission into any sacred function, if they were known to be of a scandalous character, the people might object it, and by that means hinder their promotion; and this practice is still retained in our church.

The nomination of the Bishops of the Church of England and Ireland belongs to the king, as being the founder and endower of the Episcopal Sees. But yet Episcopacy is still the same, for it is not the nomination, but the *ordination* that makes the Bishop. But if the civil magistrate shall abuse his authority by preferring an unqualified person to the Episcopal office, the Bishops whom he orders to consecrate such a person, ought to suffer *any penalties* rather than *obey* him.

The only pretences for popular elections in the scriptures, are the instances of Matthias and the seven Deacons. But the former was chosen, as the other apostles were, by God himself. The 120 that nominated him and Barnabas, were not one-fourth of the church, which consisted at that time of 500 at

least, (1 Cor. xv. 6.) The eleven apostles and the seventy disciples make eighty-one of this number ; and granting that some of the laity were present, yet nothing can be urged for elections by the laity, without the concurrence of the clergy. The seven Deacons, I grant, were nominated by the people, whose treasure they were to be entrusted with ; but even here, the determination was in the apostles, who might have rejected those who were chosen if they pleased. But even allowing, for argument sake, that Matthias and the seven Deacons were elected by the people, yet these two instances cannot establish the divine and inalienable right of the people, since I have already shown, that others of the apostolic clergy were ordained and promoted without the smallest appearance of the people's election or consent. Consequently popular election *cannot* be *essential* or *inalienable*.

But the grand pretence for separation (among Methodists in particular,) is, that "the clergy of the church are ungodly and lead wicked lives." They tell us that "ungodly ministers are unfit to administer the ordinances of religion. That there are many ungodly ministers is as evident as it is lamentable. These have no commission from God." Now in answer to this I assert, that to charge even the generality of the clergy with leading wicked lives, is a most notorious falsehood ; and I appeal to the consciences even of the accusers themselves, whether they believe this to be true ? Nay, whether they do not see and know the direct contrary ? I allow that a wicked and profligate clergyman is (in the words of Bishop Porteus,) a monster in nature : even a gay and trifling one is inconsistent with the sanctity of the ministerial character : And although I grant that characters of this

kind may be found among the clergy, yet I must protest against that generalizing spirit of illiberality which condemns the whole body for the faults of a few.— The blessed apostles themselves were but men, sinful men, of like passions with ourselves. All of them were so, and one of them was the worst man that ever lived. And we may with great modesty affirm, that not one in twelve among our clergy is near so wicked a man as Judas : Yet I never heard that his being a traitor was any imputation upon the other apostles.

But these objectors pretend, that “ungodly ministers are unfit to administer the ordinances of religion.” What ! does the efficacy of the ministry depend on the *personal worth* of the administrator, and not on the institution of Christ ? To suppose it, would be to transfer the glory from God to his weak instrument, as if any the least part of the divine virtue which he has annexed to his sacraments, did proceed from his minister, (Acts iii. 12.) To obviate this pretence, our Saviour “*chose a devil*,” (John vi. 70.) to be one of his apostles, and he received a commission to baptise and work miracles, no less than the other apostles. And there can be no doubt that the baptism administered by him, was equally effectual with that administered by any other apostle. From whence it is to be observed, that the power of divine grace, happily for mankind, is not limited by the poorness of the instrument appointed to convey it, and that a ministerial act performed by *proper authority*, may be valid to the parties to whom it is applied, be the performer ever so unworthy : Just as a sentence or pardon passed by an immoral judge are looked upon as valid, because the efficacy depends not upon the qualifications of the judge, but upon the sovereign authority from

whence he receives his commission. Such is the principle laid down by our church in her twenty-third article, and was also the opinion of the old Nonconformists.

To this it may be replied that "*a Bishop must be blameless,*" &c. (1 Tim. iii. 2,) and what then? Must not a civil magistrate also be blameless? It is certainly the duty both of our spiritual and temporal superiors to be holy; but it will not follow from thence that such as are not holy and blameless, are not endowed with authority to be clergy or judges, or that all who are holy, &c. are lawful clergy or judges, whether they have authority or not. St Paul (observes Mr Leslie,) rejoiced in Christ being preached, though *not sincerely*, by those who did it; because God can bring *good* out of *evil*, and by wicked instruments propagate his gospel, turning their *malice* (even of the *devil* himself,) to the furtherance of the faith; otherwise the apostle could have no cause to *rejoice* in the preaching of *wicked* men, if none could receive benefit by it. And he plainly supposes, (1 Cor. ix. 27.) that a man may save others by his *preaching*, and yet himself be a *castaway*. Therefore let us lay no stress upon the *instrument* (more than was upon the *waters of Jordan* to heal *Naaman*,) but trust wholly to the *commission* which conveys the virtue from God, and not from his ministers;—that all the glory may be to God and not to man. It is true, the personal qualifications of the instrument are lovely and desirable; but they become a snare where we expect any part of the *success* from them. This was the ground of the Corinthian schism, (1 Cor. i. 11.) and, though unseen, of ours at this day.

From what has been said on this subject, I would

not have it understood that I mean to apologise for the scandalous lives of any church clergymen, or to intimate that the Dissenting teachers are entirely irreproachable, and the clergy worldly-minded and dissipated. Nay, Dissenting teachers themselves confess the very contrary: I not only think (says one,) that there may be good ministers in the church, but that I have a much higher opinion of some of them, than of many of them among ourselves, (Newton's *Corresp. with a Dissent. Minister*, 1809, p. 44.) But whose fault is it that wicked ministers are allowed to remain in the church? It is the fault of the people, and it were to be wished that all parishioners were convinced, and would do their duty in this respect, before they think of separating from the church. If by humble entreaties and a pious example, they cannot prevail with their minister to perform what the law of God and the church enjoins him, they ought to complain to the Bishop of the diocese, that "being found guilty, he may by just judgment be deposed," Art. 23*.

* There is one thing (says Bishop White,) of great moment to persuade the people to live in conformity and in the unity of the church, viz. the holy and religious conversation of conformable men. When people shall observe conformable Ministers, diligent and industrious in serving God, and promoting the salvation of christian souls, committed to their charge;—when they behold in them peaceable, sober, and virtuous conversation; and that they are *no less diligent* in sowing the seed of grace, than *heretics* and *schismatics* are in sowing tares;—this will *prevail* very much to persuade them to honour the present church, and the discipline thereof. Now, on the contrary, *no one thing* hath been a *greater scandal* and occasion of withdrawing *many* from conformity, than the *profane negligence* of some conformable ministers, than their *looseness of life*, their *avarice* and *ambition* in heaping together benefices and promotions,

As for Discipline, it is to be lamented that it has not been, long before this, restored to its primitive vigour, and exercised against those members of the church who disgrace their christian profession. This *neglect* however cannot be imputed to the *lay-members*, but to the *governors* of the church. Neither are the members answerable for the wickedness of any of their brethren, provided that they are so far from joining in it, that they do all in their power to prevent or punish it*, (John vi. 23.—Acts xxvii. 85.—Gal. vi. 4.5.)

I have now examined the principal objections against the Episcopal Church, and I think this should be no small satisfaction to men's minds that it professes nothing contrary to the nature and design of christianity; from whence it follows, that men may be very good Catholic christians while they live in her communion, and then I am certain they cannot be such when they forsake it, for nothing but apparent and manifest danger of committing sin can justify such a separation.

Since then to remain in the unity of the Catholic Church (of which the Reformed Episcopal Church in England, Ireland, and Scotland, is such a sound and orthodox portion,) is of the utmost importance to the

—and than a *gross neglect* in discharging their duty either in their own persons, or in entertaining and rewarding able and sufficient curates. *Treatise on the Sabbath*, in the Dedication to Archbishop Laud, Lond. 1635.

If a clergyman be eager after *pleasures*, the world and its idols, *trifling* and *vain* in life, all he says from the pulpit will signify *nothing*. More sinners have been converted by *holy*, than by *learned* men. It is the greatest presumption to pretend to heal another of a distemper I labour under myself. *Bishop Wilson's Sacra Privata*.

* See APPENDIX, No. III.

eternal interests of the individual. Schism, or an unnecessary separation from it, must, as I have already proved, be a sin of a very heinous nature; and consequently every OCCASIONAL SEPARATION; that is, occasionally attending the meetings of Separatists of any denomination, must be *sin* in a similar point of view. It is the commission of an acknowledged sin; and the only difference between the *constant* separatist and the *occasional* one appears to be, that the one continues in the habitual practice of that sin, which the other occasionally commits.

Communion with schismatics is most plainly forbidden in scripture. "*I wish they were even cut off (i. e. at least refused your communion,) who trouble you **," says St Paul, (Gal. v. 12.) Again, "*we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received from us,*" (2 Thess. iii. 6.) Now, who can walk more disorderly, than he that breaks the unity of the church, and sets up a separate communion in opposition to the Catholic? "*And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him†, that he may be ashamed,*" (ver. 14.) In short, what can be a plainer precept than that, (Rom. xvi. 17.) "*Mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them.*" Or that (Tit. iii. 10.) "*A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition, reject;*" where the word *heretic* naturally signifies what we mean by

* Οἱ ἀνὰ τμήτας, i. e. those who endeavour to crumble you into factions, and divide your unity.

† Μὴ συνιστάμενοι, do not mix with him, especially in religious assemblies.

the word schismatic. For, in the first ages, heresy and schism were indiscriminately used to signify any communion opposite to the Catholic communion *. Should a man sometimes join with his prince's forces, and sometimes with his enemies, and fight sometimes on the one side, and sometimes on the other,—is he not a rebel? (Gal. v. 12.—James i. 8.)

Hence appears the absolute necessity of all true churchmen adhering to the fellowship of their Bishops and clergy, and carefully avoiding the meetings of Protestant sectaries of all denominations,—and this for the two following reasons: 1. The sectaries *have no ministry*. 2. They are *schismatics*.

I. We must recollect that those pretended ministers who officiate in the meetings of Methodists, Presbyterians, &c. have not been ordained by Bishops. And consequently (as I have already demonstrated,) these men have not been sent by God; and therefore it must be utterly unlawful to attend their ministry. "*For how can we hear without a preacher, and how can they preach except they be sent?*" (Rom. x. 15.) The Lord forbids us to hear them, because "*he hath not sent them, and therefore they shall not profit this people.*" (Jerem. xxiii. 32.) To hear then, in such a case, is

* The primitive christians of the three first centuries were decidedly hostile to the scandalous practice of Occasional Communion: "If any one pray with one that is excommunicated, though in a private house, let him be suspended from communion," (*Apost. Can. 8.*) "Let the Bishop, Presbyter, or Deacon, that only prays with heretics, be suspended; but if he suffer them to officiate as clergymen, let him be deposed," (*Can. 37.*) To the same purpose are the 9th, 33d, and 37th Can. of the *Co. of Laodicea*, held A. D. 367. The sentiments of the Fathers on this head are collected in *Kettlemell's Works*, Vol. II. p. 613. The canons of the English and Irish Reformed Church express similar sentiments.

rebellion against God, and utterly unlawful, and is countenancing them, and hardening their presumption and daring imposture. (See *Modern Pleas for Schism and Infidelity reviewed*, by J. Smith, a Layman, Lond. 1717, 8d edit.) It is (observes Mr Smith,) a *hard saying*, and though I cannot run into our modern charity of soothing and flattering them in their perverseness, yet I wish from the bottom of my soul, it were not a true one. Our men of temper may use what arts they please to *blind* this matter, and excite the passions of honest and good-natured men about it; but the importance of the point exacts of us not to dissemble here. And we must plainly insist, that *federally* speaking, not one of the *Dissenters* have such a thing as either the *word* or *sacraments* among them. For let them be as noisy as they will, it is impossible for that which is allowed to be *invalid* in the *agent*, to be *valid* in the *subject*. *Nemo dat quod non habet*, is a maxim that hath not only the authority of schools, but the reason and eternal nature of things on its side. Will any man be so absurd as to say, that my *assuming* the title of a justice of the peace would make me so, with respect to those I should pretend to command? Would not every body laugh at the folly, as well as impudence of such a pretence? If then the priesthood be an honour, "*no man taketh to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron*,"—if our Lord has "*given some apostles, some pastors and teachers, &c. for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry*," &c. certainly we may venture further to interrogate with the apostle, "*How can they preach except they be sent?*" If not *preach*, neither can they administer the *sacraments*; and consequently, whatever they presume to do of that kind is *null* and *void*.

The case being thus, the *nonentity* of these unhappy people's church appears upon a double account: *first*, as wanting a *ministry*,—and *second*, as wanting the *due preaching* of the pure word, and right administration of the sacraments, which our church, in her nineteenth Article, makes the essential part of a church. So that the difference between us and this people, as already considered, is *a ministry and no ministry, a church and no church*.

II. But even supposing that our Dissenters were Episcopalians, and had a true ministry (like the ancient Donatists and Novatians,) yet we ought to abstain from communicating with them, because they are *always schismatical*, and, *in many instances, heretical*. This I shall briefly prove with respect to the two leading sects of the present day, the Methodists and Presbyterians.

In the first place, I assert that the Methodists are schismatics. They have wilfully, and without sufficient reason, established congregations and (pretended) pastors, entirely independent of the authority of the lawful Bishops of England and Ireland; and in this, as I have before proved, consists the sin of schism. "Different and variable as their doctrines are (says Dr Randolph, the present Bishop of London, *Charge to his Clergy*, 1810,) they all agree in the pernicious practice of gathering to themselves congregations, drawn aside from their lawful teachers. In fact, it is the very essence of *schism*, and shews plainly that vanity and ambition in the leaders, the love of novelty and opposition in the followers, and not any *conscientious* difference of opinion, is that which is at the bottom of these dissensions." And what renders their separation more inexcusable, they *profess* themselves

members of the church, and *occasionally* frequent its worship. For, by their occasionally coming to church, they plainly shew, that there is nothing in our public service which they do not approve of, or at least which is *unlawful*,—therefore they have no excuse for separating from her. But there is a more important reason, why all communication with the Methodists should be avoided, namely, because they profess several *heretical* and *dangerous doctrines*. They dwell (says the acute Dr Hales,) almost exclusively on some grand articles of christianity, *justification by faith, regeneration, sanctification, &c.* and magnify them to such a degree, as to attach little importance to others.—Thus, while they magnify the saving power of *faith*, they undervalue *hope*, and circumscribe *charity*. Not content with that humble, modest, diffident, “*trembling hope*,” which becomes the frailty and imperfection even of the best men to entertain, they aspire to, and inculcate a hardy *assurance* of salvation,—an experimental *knowledge* of the *forgiveness of sins*, by *sensible* impressions of the holy Spirit; arrogating to themselves and to their hearers the *extraordinary gifts* and *graces of the Spirit*, shed forth plenteously on the apostles. (*Methodism Inspected*, Dub. 1804.) We have great reason indeed to affirm, that the principal object of the Methodists, in professing such *regard* for the church, has been merely to serve as a *decoy* to draw away her members, and thus by degrees to increase their ranks, and form themselves into an establishment. Not unlike to them did their predecessors, the old Puritans, act. “They formed a sect (says Hume,) which secretly lurked in the church, but pretended at first not to any separate worship or discipline.” What the consequence was of such double dealing

is too well known. In like manner, these new Puritans most ostentatiously and hypocritically profess to be real and true members of the Church of England; while, at the same time, they treat with the most wanton abuse, and the most outrageous contempt, the clergy of the church, nay and even her discipline. The conduct of the Methodists (says the editor of the *Ecclesiastical Register*, p. 245. Lond. 1810,) in professing to be members of the Church of England, is allied to their general practice in other matters. So far from their being a component and sound part of our holy church, it is their uniform practice to vilify its clergy; to creep into the confidence of their more ignorant parishioners; and either, with pernicious insinuations, insidiously whisper doubts as to the credit, or openly attack the morals of such as are too wise to be duped by their promises, or alarmed by their anathemas!—And with all this, shall the Methodists presume to be a *sound* part of the Church of England? At a time too, when one of their most furious and authorised bigots have stigmatised our clergy by declaring, that “in one century they would have obliterated all the remaining practical religion in the church, had it not been for the Methodists.”—Surely the impudence of this sect rivals its ignorance!

In the second place, those who go under the general name of Presbyterians, are equally to be avoided with the Methodists. Although their standard of faith as preached by their ministers*, is purer and approaches nearer to the church than that of the Methodists, yet

* I say as *Preached by their ministers*, for their doctrines, as contained in the Confession of Faith, are widely different from the Articles of the Reformed Episcopal Church. “The system of the Presbyterians is *fatalism* of the sternest aspect, and the cruellest rigour,

we must recollect, that "a very great number of those who still claim the name of Presbyterians, have sadly departed from the faith of the gospel. In both countries (Scotland and Ireland,) Socinian, Arian, and Arminian errors, with a keen opposition to all confessions of faith, as tests of orthodoxy, prevail among several classes of Protestant Dissenters." Yet still, whether Presbyterians retain the true faith or not, they cannot be excused from the charge of *schism*. Unity of *faith*, as I have shewn before, by itself is not sufficient to unite all christians into one society. People may profess the same essential articles of faith, and yet make different and opposite communions : Thus the Novatians and Donatists, in the primitive ages, professed the same essential articles of faith which the Catholics professed, and yet they were divided from the Catholic Church *. In the same manner Presbyterians, at least those who profess the true faith, are in a state of unjustifiable separation from the lawful Bishops of these countries, and consequently are cut off from the apostles' fellowship, and from Catholic communion ; and therefore they are justly

and is, of course, attended with its inseparable horrifying train of consequences."—See *The Difference stated betwixt the Presbyterian Establishment and the Episcopal Church of Scotland*, by Rev. J. Milne, Presbyter of the Episcopal Congregation, Banff. Aberdeen, 1811.

* The unity of the Catholic Church consists at least of two parts: the one *in our creed*, called in scripture the UNITY of FAITH, the breach of which is *heresy*,—and the other *in our practice*, called the BOND of PEACE, the breach of which is *schism* ; and either *heresy* or *schism* are sufficient to cut any body of people from being parts of the Catholic Church. And therefore, though the Presbyterians, &c. were not chargeable with breaking the *Unity of Faith*, yet they are excluded from the Pale of the Catholic Church by only breaking the *Bond of Peace*. *Smith's Pleas*, p. 36.

charged with schism, for keeping up uncharitable divisions, and unnecessarily rending the Church of God for trifles. For trifles, I say, for I have already proved our terms of lay-communion to be *lawful*, and nothing but sinful terms of communion can justify separation. Indeed, the generality of Dissenters do not think that lay-communion with our church is unlawful. This is evident, not only from their occasionally joining with us as lay-persons, and some of them for many years, but also from the approbation of the General Assembly of the Presbyterians of Scotland. For, in their memorial to the House of Commons, A. D. 1790, they expressly allow that "the members of the Kirk of Scotland may conscientiously communicate occasionally with the Church of England." So that the people are condemned in their separation by their own teachers. And it is justly remarked by the Presbyterian Assembly of England in 1648, in their writings against the Independents, who had separated from them without sufficient reason, "that to separate from those churches, with whom occasionally you may join without sin, seemeth to be a *most unjust separation*." Truly I know not how the Presbyterians of Scotland can excuse their separation from the lawful Bishops of that country; they surely do not imagine that the act of Parliament, by which they are established, can take away the sin of schism. And it is acknowledged by Irish Presbyterians of the present day, that "Episcopalians belong to the true Church of Christ as well as Presbyterians," that "we are brethren with them in Christ;" they have even given up the divine right of Presbyterian government (for which they contended so vehemently in the seventeenth century,) they say "it is not essential,—that the plan of government

may be accommodated to existing circumstances ;” and moreover, that “ difference upon that subject, where men are agreed in the fundamental truths of the gospel, is no sufficient reason for breaking the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and for withdrawing from communion with each other.” M'Dowel *ut supra*, p. 11.

To this author, and to those who agree with him on this subject, I address the words of the late Rev. and pious Philip Skelton : As to you who regard church government, and the other differences between yourselves and us as *nothing*, surely you must look on peace and unity on one side, and schism on the other as less than nothing, if you continue to dissent. Your safest way then must be to join with the church, because by that means you avoid the sin of schism at least, which must be a great and real sin in you, while you dissent.—Or to make use of their own reasoning against the Independents : “ If we be a church of Christ, and Christ hold communion with us, why do you separate from us ? If we be the body of Christ, do not they that separate from the body, separate from the head also ? We are loath to speak any thing that may offend you, yet we entreat you to consider, that if the apostle calls those divisions of the Church of Corinth (wherein christians did not separate into divers congregations,) schisms, (1 Cor. x. 10.) may not your secession from us, and professing you cannot join with us as members, and setting up congregations of another communion, be more properly called schism ? You gather churches out of churches, and set up churches in an opposite way to our churches, and all this you do voluntarily and unwarrantably, not having any sufficient cause for it.”

But it may be replied that "Dissenters in general have never examined the terms of communion with the church, or have been ignorant of the sinfulness of divisions; and surely, then, you will not say that they are without hope of mercy and salvation, because they are not members of Catholic communion."—Now, although I assert that the one visible body of Christ is the only communion wherein the *covenanted* mercies of God can be expected; yet I never meant that schismatics are incapable of God's *uncovenanted* mercies. I believe that God is infinitely merciful, and that his mercy is over all his works; and that in cases of real and unavoidable *necessity*, God will confer upon *conscientious believers* (although separated from the church,) all the benefit of his sacraments*. And the same, I am willing to believe, of all those who attend unauthorised administrations, through invincible ignorance, and a natural incapacity to judge of these matters. But as for those who are *capable*

* After a rest of one hundred years, the controversy respecting the validity of baptism administered by Presbyterian teachers and other laymen, has again been brought before the public; and many thanks are due to Mr Daubeney for the able manner in which he has defended God's truth, against the decisions and encroachments of the civil magistrate. See his *Exam. of the Judgment delivered by Sir J. Nicholl, L. L. D. against Rev. J. Wickes, for refusing to bury a child which had been baptised by a Dissenting Minister*, Bath, 1811. *Laurence's Lay Baptism Invalid*, in two parts, 1709-1713. *Dr Trapp's Review of the Controv. between Laurence and Bingham*, Discourses II. p. 110. 1722. *Laurence's Dissenters Baptism Null and Void, by the Articles, &c. of the Church of England*, Reprinted, Lond. 1810.—With respect to the question, whether baptism should be administered to converts to the church, who have already received lay-baptism, I refer the scrupulous to *Dr Trapp*, p. 117. *Bennet's Rights*, p. 352. *Laurence's Lay-baptism Invalid*.

of examining into these subjects, they are certainly inexcusable. And therefore I intreat all such Dissenters seriously to consider, Whether they will be able to justify these dreadful effects of their separation at the last day?—Will they then be able to say, that they laid aside every prejudice, and did *all that was possible* to prevent them ; and that they would never have caused or kept up these disturbances, if they could with a good conscience have complied with the church?—Will they then think that a christian ought esteem the supposed inconveniences of a surplice, a form of prayer, kneeling at worship, or the like, more grievous and intolerable than rending and tearing the church, which is the body of Christ, to pieces.

A

TREATISE ON THE CHURCH, &c. &c.

PART SECOND.

CHAP. I.

THE TRUE STATE OF THE QUESTION BETWEEN THE RE-
FORMED EPISCOPAL CHURCH AND THE ROMANISTS,
RESPECTING THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, AND THE ME-
THOD OF PRESERVING ITS UNITY.

IN the former part of this treatise I have stated, and have endeavoured to defend the true notion of Christ's Catholic Church, viz. that it consists of all *Faithful* christians, adhering to the communion of their *Orthodox* Bishops, and those clergy authorised by them, under Christ its supreme head. This definition I have applied to the respective bodies of professing christians which pass under the general name of Protestants, and proved at large that the society of christians in England, Ireland, and Scotland, which is designated by the title of Reformed Episcopal, alone corresponds with the above-mentioned definition.— I have, at the same time, vindicated her against the

cavils and objections of Protestant Dissenters, especially those of Presbyterians and Methodists.

It could not, however, have been expected (seeing that the existence of numerous heresies and false prophets has been foretold by our Lord,) that these should be the only adversaries against whom the Reformed Episcopal Church has to contend, and from whose aspersions she is bound to vindicate herself. There is also another party of professing christians, who for several hundred years past have maintained (in the opinion of *all* Protestants,) the most pernicious errors with respect to the doctrines and worship of real christianity; yet have presumed to assert, that the society of christians or church adhering to the Bishop of Rome is the Catholic Church; that all Bishops, and private christians owe subjection to him by divine right; and that whoever maintains opinions contrary to those maintained by him, are cut off from all ordinary hopes of salvation. Such is the *modern* system of the Catholic Church, set up some hundred years ago by this aspiring Bishop and his flatterers, in direct opposition to the scriptural and primitive system, as I shall soon demonstrate. In conformity with these notions, each member of that communion is bound explicitly to "acknowledge the holy Catholic Apostolic Roman Church for the mother and mistress of all churches, and promise true obedience to the Bishop of Rome, successor to St Peter, Prince of the apostles, and Vicar of Jesus Christ."

In opposition to these *novel* and *schismatical* notions I shall lay down a few principles of Catholic Unity, as instituted in the apostles' times, maintained in the primitive churches, preserved by many orthodox

churches during the darkest ages of Popery, and finally adopted by all Reformed Episcopal Churches since the grand reformation *.

I. The first grand principle of unity is, that all Bishops are originally of *equal power and authority*; and that each Bishop, with his clergy and the laity united to them, professing the true christian faith without the addition of false doctrine, and practising the necessary christian worship without corruption, constitutes a particular church, wherein the Bishop presides as the principle of unity.

II. Every Bishop has the chief power of government in his own diocese or church, *independent* of all others. But, in order to understand properly the limits of this power, we must distinguish between the *substantial* and the *ritual* part of religion. For it is in the latter chiefly, that Bishops possess an absolute power in their own church, being at liberty to use what indifferent rites they think proper, without being accountable to any other. Their independency was so absolute in the beginning, that it extended to all matters whatever, relating to the internal economy of the church, to rites and ceremonies, to the form of prayer which was used, nay to the particular terms of the creeds, with all that was necessary in order to enforce and to preserve uniformity. In matters of *Faith*, indeed, when they corrupted the truth by heretical doctrines, or introduced any rituals that were destructive of it; they were obnoxious to the censure of all other Bishops, and every individual of

* See Kettlewell's Works, Vol. II. p. 588. 613, Sherlock's *Vind. of some Protestant Principles of Church Unity*, 2d edit. 1688. Bingham's *Antiquities*, Book 16. ch. 8. B. 2. ch. 5. 6. 16. B. 16. ch. 1.—Leslie's Works, I. p. 575. Barrow on the *Unity of the Church*.

the whole catholic college of Bishops was authorised to oppose them.

III. Although all Bishops are supreme in their own dioceses, yet they are bound to live in *catholic communion*, and preserve close fellowship and constant communion with *each other*. Indeed, this is a consequence of that unity which our Lord commanded to be observed between all his disciples; so that the several particular churches, however almost of necessity having separate and independent rites and customs, yet agreeing in all essential and fundamental points, make up the one Catholic Church of Christ. —It follows also, from this sort of connexion (nay, from the command of Christ to the first Bishops, “*Go ye therefore and disciple all nations,*” &c. Matt. xxviii: 19.) that every Bishop, although only ruling his own church, has a concern in seeing that those articles of faith, by the consent in which the connexion was kept up, and made to answer its proper end, should be preserved pure and inviolate; and this gives him a warrant to interpose with his advice and remonstrance, whenever, in any of the churches, he perceives a disposition to run into heresy and to corrupt the genuine doctrines of the gospel. In this sense (says Bingham,) every Bishop was an universal pastor and Bishop of the world, as having a common care and concern for the whole Church of Christ*. And this was the

* This power of censuring heretical and schismatical Bishops, does not imply a power and authority of *declaring* them to be heretics, and obliging all men to submit to their decrees. Therefore the *effects* of these censures must depend on the opinion of the people, those who believe the censure just, will withdraw from the communion of their Bishop;—those who do not believe it just, will still communicate with him. For whoever pronounces the sentence,

sort, and the only sort of interference, which in the beginning was allowed to any Bishop, whether the Bishop of Rome or any other, in common with his fellows. The dignity of that See, indeed, owing to the opulence and extent of the metropolis to which it belonged, might give a particular weight to his opinion, but still he was only considered as a simple individual, among many who were his equals. Nor did this or any other circumstance give to him more than to any other Bishop, a power to repress disorder in any diocese but his own. He might admonish, reprove, or exhort; but the judgment upon such matters, when it became necessary to pass any such judgment, was reserved to the assembly of all the Bishops; whether of the province, of the nation, or of the empire, all which assemblies obtained the name of Synods or Councils.

. So that the unity of the Catholic Church consists not in the *subjection* of one church to another, or of all churches to *one* supreme Bishop on earth, but in the profession of the same faith, and in the agreement and concord of their Bishops in acknowledging each other's churches, and maintaining communion with them upon Catholic principles, and governing their own churches, as far as is expedient, by common rules of worship and discipline *.

the people must execute it; and, if they will still adhere to their Bishop, he may defy his deponents and all their power, as the reformed Bishops and people do all the anathemas of the Bishops of Rome. *Sherlock's Vind.* p. 29.

* As for *General Councils*, there is no necessity of them to Catholic communion. The christian churches maintained a very strict alliance and communion with each other for above 300 years without them,—and Catholic communion was better preserved then,

It must not be omitted, that for the further maintenance and regulation of this concord and correspondence of the Bishops among themselves, it was found expedient in the purest ages, and is still maintained by the modern Reformed Episcopal Churches, that neighbouring Bishops (as those of the same province or nation,) should unite into one ecclesiastical *body*, and govern their churches by mutual consent, all under the inspection of one of themselves (styled Archbishop,) whom they have invested with a power of calling and presiding in provincial synods, a principal interest in the ordination of Bishops in his province, and the like, which are determined and limited by ecclesiastical canons.

Such was the true primitive and apostolic constitution of the christian church, till the time of Constantine the Great, A. D. 325, when the civil government of the empire becoming united in one head, Patriarchs were set over the Archbishops in particular nations, in the same manner as the Exarchs had the civil rule over their respective provinces ; and if the Bishops of several Patriarchates met, the precedence of these Patriarchs was adjusted to avoid contests.— But this disposition was only among the Bishops of the Roman empire, and who might the more conve-

than it has been since ; which is a demonstration, that such a supreme governing power over the whole church is not necessary to Catholic communion, for then Catholic communion could never have been maintained without it : and yet thus it was in St Cyprian's days, who was as zealous an asserter of Catholic communion as any before or since. (*Sherlock's Vind.* p. 52.)—In truth, there never was yet (nor at all necessary that there should be,) a council composed of Bishops from all parts of the world. See *Leslie's Works*, I. 576. *Preserv.* III. 39.

niently do it, as being all under one emperor, and therefore, with his allowance, might meet in any part of his empire. Of these Patriarchs, the Bishops of Rome and Constantinople were the most considerable in authority and grandeur, on account of their residence in the imperial cities. They were often engaged in violent disputes for the superiority of their respective Patriarchates, but the Patriarch of Constantinople both claimed and in the end preserved his independence, in spite of the repeated efforts which were made by the Bishop of Rome to bring him into subjection.

This short account of the government of the church by Patriarchs, will help to give the reader an insight into the origin of that power in the Roman Bishop (as shall be more fully explained hereafter,) by which he has been enabled to introduce an alteration in the government of the church in the western parts of the world,—to trample on the divinely-instituted right of his fellow Bishops,—and to maintain that the Catholic Church consists of those only who are subject to his jurisdiction and authority.

In such a case, then, I desire to know why these oppressed Bishops and churches may not vindicate their own rights and liberties,—cast off such an intolerable yoke,—and restore primitive Catholic unity? My Lord (says the celebrated Mr Leslie, in reply to Bossuet,) we think it incumbent upon every Bishop of the church, to assert his own primitive power given to him by our Lord, and to restore the discipline of the primitive church, which leaves him supreme in his own diocese, not hurt or infringed in the least by the regulations made among the Bishops themselves, for their mutual correspondence and management of the

affairs of the Episcopal college. We consider with St Cyprian, "Quam periculosum sit in divinis rebus, ut quis cedat jure suo et potestate," *Epist.* 73.

I shall now proceed to prove that the Popish system of the Catholic Church, by which the Bishop of Rome claims "the full power of feeding, ruling, and governing the whole church," has not the least foundation in scripture and pure antiquity. On the contrary, the reformed system of church unity, as laid down in this chapter, will appear clearly to have been the primitive apostolic system, which Romanists cannot reject, without rendering the commandments of God of none effect by their traditions, and continuing schismatically cut off from Catholic communion.

But before I begin, I must desire the reader to bear in mind the two following observations, with respect to the true state of the question.

I. The question is not whether a supreme pastor is *necessary* to preserve the unity of the church, but whether a supreme pastor, in the person of Peter and his successors, was *instituted* by Christ. For, is our mere supposition of the expediency and necessity of the thing sufficient to build such vast pretensions on, which ought only to be grounded on *divine institution*? Is it not more modest rather to argue the contrary, that because there is no divine institution of such an office, that therefore it is not necessary, however we may mistake the conveniency of it? In short, Christ only had an unquestionable title to prescribe the form of government, without instructing us in the reasons on which he acted, and we may well believe that what he prescribed, is the fittest for us and the best.

II. The true state of the question respecting the

Bishop of Rome's supremacy, is not to be derived from the writings of this or that Popish author, who, in Protestant countries, talk loosely about "the successor of Peter, and centre of the Catholic communion," in order to ensnare us if possible ; but from the authorised documents of the Romish Church, viz. their creeds, catechisms, and general councils, of which (as said to be *infallible*,) no Romanist can disbelieve the smallest word, without ceasing to be a Romanist. The sense of the council of Trent in this matter I have stated already ; the (pretended) general council of Florence is more express, " We define (says the canon,) that the holy apostolic See, and Roman Pontiff, is invested with the primacy over the *whole world*, and that the Roman Pontiff is the successor of St Peter Prince of the apostles, and that he is the true *Vicar of Christ*, and *head of the whole church*, and the *father and doctor of all christians* ; and that the *full power of feeding, ruling, and governing the universal church* was given to him in St Peter, by our Lord Jesus Christ, as is contained in the acts of general councils, and in the sacred canons."

In order to secure these powers, he not only requires an acknowledgment of "*true obedience*" to him from all the laity, as mentioned above in the Trent creed, but exacts the most solemn oaths (totally unheard of in the primitive ages,) from the Bishops subject to him. For, since the Council of Trent, A.D. 1546, his dominion over his brother Bishops is carried to such a height, and so confirmed, that in truth they are become little better than his vicars. They swear obedience to him in as strong terms, as any subject can use towards his sovereign ; and even oblige themselves to appear in person before him every three years,

or to excuse themselves by a sufficient deputy. With such care is this vassalage enforced !

This being the *true* state of their doctrine concerning their Pope's supremacy, and that which I would call *naked* Popery, I am sure (to use the words of Dr Gee,) I have a commission from the Church of England (nay, from all Episcopal churches,) to declare that she cannot, without betraying the rights of all Bishops, and the interest of the Catholic Church, espouse the doctrine of the Bishop of Rome's supremacy, which we of her communion do believe is altogether without foundation, either in scripture or primitive antiquity. Gee's *Vind. of Answer to Nubes Testium*, 1688.

CHAP. II.

THE SUPREMACY OF THE BISHOP OF ROME CONFUTED
FROM THE SCRIPTURES, WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE
APOSTOLIC METHOD OF PRESERVING THE UNITY OF
THE CHURCH.

THE Bishop of Rome claims a supremacy over the whole christian church, because it is pretended, that our Saviour made the apostle Peter the head and supreme governor of it. This we deny, having undoubted proofs, that all the apostles were placed by Christ in *equal* power and authority over his church*.

And here it must not be denied, that some of the apostles were superior to the rest, both in personal *merit*, and in order of *place*. Of these were "*James, Peter, and John, who seemed to be pillars,*" (Gal. ii. 9.) and were accounted "*chief apostles,*" (2 Cor. xi. 5. xii. 11.) Farther, it is acknowledged by many of our divines, that Peter in general is preferred before the rest, and oftentimes acted as their foreman or prolocutor, at least for some time after Christ's ascension. This is attributed by some of the fathers to his being first called to be an apostle, or to his age; but it was most probably owing to his extraordinary forwardness and zeal. Whatever was the true

* *Bishop Patrick's Examination of the Texts for the Supremacy;* and his *Sermon in Answer to Godden's Sermon on St Peter's Day,* 1687. *Bishop Stratford's Discourse,* in answer to *Clenche and Godden,* 1688. *Collins' Defence of Bishop Andrews' Tortura Torti,* 1617.

reason, it is certain that nothing was founded on it but a mere priority of *place*, and that neither Peter nor any other apostle had any *power* or *authority* over the rest.

And here, in a matter of such infinite importance, and which they make the very "sum of christianity," we might expect to meet, not only with the Bishop of Rome's name in scripture, but also the time and manner of his instalment, and the deed of conveyance to his successors, in the plainest and most significant terms. But they are not able to produce any such; the whole stress of the evidence is laid upon a few obscure and metaphorical passages.

The arguments, on which St Peter's pretended supremacy and authority over the other apostles is founded, are of two kinds: 1st, Such words of Christ as seem to imply or give this authority: 2d, Some great privileges granted.

I. Such words of Christ as seem to imply or give this power; and these are two texts, viz. Matt. xvi. 18. 19.—John xxi. 15.—St Matthew relates, that upon St Peter's having confessed our Saviour to be the Son of God, Christ said to him, "*Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, &c. and I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven.*"—Now, were we to consider this passage by itself, without adverting at all to what is its proper comment, the subsequent conduct of Peter and the other apostles, yet even then it would be difficult to contend, that our Lord's saying was to be applied *exclusively* to Peter. For the question which led to that, was put to *all* the apostles; and Peter when he answered must, according to fair construction, be con-

sidered as answering in the name of all. There is nothing particular to Peter, but that he is addressed by name, and that to his name our Lord makes an immediate allusion.

As to what is meant by the word *rock*, which the Romanists interpret as making Peter the supreme governor of the church, it is plain that, 1st, there is no certainty Peter is meant by the rock, upon which Christ promised to build his church: Nor, 2d, if he were, that Christ intended, by calling him a rock, to invest him with supremacy over his church.

1. I say there is no evidence that *Peter* is here meant by the *rock* *. The whole text in dispute is thus exactly translated in the Latin Vulgate, according to the original Greek, *Tu es Petrus, et super hanc Petram ædificabo ecclesiam meam*. Now if Christ had said, *Tu es Petrus, et super hunc Petrum ædificabo ecclesiam*, it might have been of some service to support the supremacy of Peter; although even so, it would not have included his *successors*, who are here not so much as pointed at. But *hanc Petram*, being of

* Πέτρος, *Peter*, does not mean *a rock*, as it has been incautiously translated, but *a stone*. Christ is the Rock (Πέτρα,) Peter (Πέτρος) is only *a little piece of a rock*, or *a stone* that has been dug out of the rock. Thus is the dignity of Christ preserved, and Peter properly kept at a due distance from him. The passage, therefore, truly means, Thou art Peter (or Cephas, both meaning *a stone*,) a fragment from that sacred rock (πέτρα, which thou hast confessed) on which I will build my Church.—This important remark I have extracted from the review (in the *British Critic*, 1812,) of a tract lately published on this very subject by *Granville Sharp, Esq.* entitled, *Remarks on a passage* (Matt. xvi. 18.) *which has long been perverted by the Church of Rome, in support of her vain and baneful pretensions to a superiority or supreme dominion over all other Episcopal churches*, 1812.

a different *gender*, most plainly shews that *Petrus* or *Peter* was not the *Petra* or *rock*, of which our Saviour speaks. The word *Petra* is never made use of to denote the apostle *Peter*. But, in its metaphorical signification, it is several times applied to *Christ*. And therefore, if, in the text now under consideration, it may fairly be so applied according to the connexion of the whole passage, it ought to be applied to *Him* rather than to *Peter*. Now, whenever St Peter is spoken of as a *pillar* or *foundation* of the church, it is never *by himself*, but always in conjunction with others, (Gal. ii. 9.—Eph. ii. 19. 20. 21.) but Jesus Christ is set forth unto us, as the *single* and *sole foundation* of his church, (1 Cor. iii. 2.—Eph. ii. 19. 20. 21.)—Let any man, therefore, read the whole context without prejudice, and compare it with other passages of scripture, particularly with those which I have now quoted, and it will plainly appear, that by *hanc Petram*, or this rock, our Saviour did not mean *Peter himself*, but only the *Faith*, of which he had just then made profession, which was, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. This is the fundamental principle of the christian church,—this is the sure foundation or rock upon which it is built : for “*other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ,*” (1 Cor. iii. 11.)

This interpretation is countenanced by a large majority of the ancient fathers. Even they who apply these words to Peter, do not really differ from this exposition ; for they had respect (in calling him the *rock*,) to his preaching the doctrine of Christ, and having the honour to be the first preacher of it to the Gentiles. And in this sense, even admitting Peter himself to be the rock on which the church was built,

the meaning of the words may probably be this, viz. that Christ would make Peter a great and faithful instrument in planting the gospel, and this he might very easily be, without having the least supremacy over the other apostles. And if this were what our Lord intended, it was accordingly verified, for Peter actually laid the first foundation of the church both among the Jews and Gentiles, (Acts ii. 41. x. 9. xv. 7.) But in this work Peter could have no successors, because that would be in effect to say, that the foundations of the christian church were not yet laid, which was fully accomplished above 1700 years ago; and moreover, that each Bishop of Rome (many of whom have been monsters in wickedness,) has in succession become the rock on which Christ's Church is built, in the same manner as St Peter was in the beginning.

Farther, continuing the same supposition, we have not the least reason to believe, that the comparison of the rock implies a superiority of *power* and *government*. For what resemblance is there between a rock and a governor? Can our adversaries produce any instance, in which a supremacy of power was ever conferred by comparing any person to a rock? Or, is it the office of a *foundation* to *govern*? If so, then all the apostles were governors of the whole church as well as Peter, being 'all "foundations,"' (Eph. ii. 20.) enjoying the very same power given to them by Christ, which we now suppose was here *promised* to him alone.

As for the other promise, that "*the keys and the power of binding and loosing*" (which are the same, according to the *Roman catechism*,) should be given to Peter, it is certain that our Lord cannot be supposed by this to give him a supremacy over the apostles, or over

the whole church ; since we find, that it was actually conferred by Christ on *all* the twelve, without any distinction, (John xx. 21. 22. 23.) And accordingly, when the Holy Ghost descended, it was imparted to each of them alike, without preferring one to another, (Acts ii. 3. 4.) So that if we may explain our Lord's promise by its completion, what was promised to Peter by name (because he had then spoken for them *all*, in answer to Christ's question proposed to the whole company,) was equally promised to all the rest. And if this promise was not fulfilled to Peter at the same time and in the same manner as it was to all the rest, we do not find that it was fulfilled at all.

If it be said, that " this promise was performed immediately, and therefore that there was something extraordinary conferred on Peter here, since he is invested with those keys, which the other apostles did not receive till a short time before our Saviour's ascension ;"—I answer, that the rest of the apostles were *here* undoubtedly invested with the same power of the keys which was conferred on Peter ; because in the next chapter but one to this. (Matt. xviii. 17. 18. xix. 28.) our Saviour addresses them *all* as already invested with the keys, and this is agreeable to the opinion of the fathers, " who (according to Dupin, *De Ant. Eccles. Discip.* Diss. 4.) say *unanimously* that the keys were given to the whole church in the person of Peter." St Austin particularly " inculcates this an hundred times," (as his words are,) a proof of which may be seen in the epistles of Launoy, (*Epist.* 73.) who has collected twenty-six places out of St. Austin's works, to show that he taught this " openly, frequently, and constantly."

I cannot forbear to mention one of them, says

Bishop Patrick *, because it affords us many considerable remarks: "As some things (says Austin, *Enarr. in Psal.* 108.) are spoken which may seem properly to belong to the Apostle Peter, and yet have not a clear sense but when they are referred to the church, whereof he is acknowledged to have represented the person in a figure (because of the primacy he had among the apostles,) as that is, '*I will give thee the keys,*' and if *there be any like*:—So Judas sustains, after a certain manner, the person of the Jews, the enemies of Christ," &c. Here the Romanists are very forward to catch at these words, which signify a place of *priority* that Peter had among the apostles (which no one denies,) but are not willing to take any notice of the rest, which entirely overthrow that primacy they would advance him unto from this place. For, 1st, he says some things that *seem* to belong to Peter, which in truth ought to be referred to the church.—2d, That their sense is *not clear*, till they be carried beyond him.—Among which things, 3d, he reckons what Christ here says, "*I will give thee the keys,*" which Austin says are not plain, unless we refer them to the church.—Whose person, 4th, he says he represented, not by virtue of any authority he had above the rest, but *in a figure*, to signify unity, as the ancients interpret it.—And it is further remarkable, 5th, that Christ did not promise him the primacy in promising him the keys, for he had the primacy here spoken of before; and with respect to that, Christ directed these words to him rather than to any of the rest, because he was already the first *not in office*, but

* See also *Dr Collins' Epiphata to F. T.* 1617, p. 12. in which St Austin's opinion is fully explained.

in order; and so the fittest person to be singled out to represent what Christ intended. And to convince every one that there is *no authoritative primacy* meant in these words of Austin, he adds, that "Judas sustained the person of Christ's enemies, as Peter did of the church." Will any one infer from hence, that Judas had a jurisdiction over all the wicked, and left it to his successors, one of whom now possesses the same? If any will be still so perverse as to dispute, because St Austin does not mention Judas's primacy as he does Peter's, let them learn that Prosper, one of Austin's scholars, upon the very same psalm, says expressly, that "Judas bore the primacy of Christ's enemies." Which, if they will not expound to signify a supreme authority to govern Christ's enemies, let them no longer interpret Peter's primacy to signify such an authority over his friends. He had none here promised him, is as certain as any thing can be; but the keys to *commend unity* were promised, which were in truth given to *all* the rest.

But it may be asked "why our Lord directed this promise at first to Peter singly?"—To this we may answer, that, as he was the first to confess Christ to be the Messiah, he should have the honour of first opening the gate of the kingdom of heaven to the Gentiles, and admitting them into the church; and this honour we find, in fact, that he had. But then it is evident that both James and John exercised this office, independently on Peter, in converting those of the circumcision as well as he; and that St Paul was, by way of excellency, and by virtue of his mission, the apostle of the Gentiles, (Rom. xi. 13. xv. 16.—Gal. i. 6. ii. 8.) and had the key of the kingdom of heaven given to him as much as to St Peter.

The other passage adduced to prove Peter's supremacy, is John xxi. 15. where our Saviour bids Peter thrice "*to feed his sheep and lambs.*" If this place be forced to bestow any authority on Peter, it will make him not *chief*, but *sole* pastor of the whole church, and in this sense the above mentioned Council of Florence seems to have understood these words. In like manner, Dr De la Hogue of Maynooth College, gravely informs us, that the "primacy of Peter over the other apostles is *very manifestly* collected from these words, for Christ committed to him the care not only of the *lambs*, but also of the *sheep* or mothers of the flock, that is, of the *pastors* themselves, and therefore of *all churches*, and *of every thing belonging to them!*" (*Tract. de Ecclesia*, p. 324.) So that they who were pastors no less than Peter himself, are here turned into simple *sheep*, to be led by him; which is confuted by the whole history of the gospel, and by all antiquity. Did he feed those apostles on whom the same Holy Ghost fell, who had the same commission given at the same time and in the same words: "*to preach the gospel to all nations,*" or "*to every creature?*" (Matt. xxviii. 19.—Mark xvi. 15.—John xx. 21.) If not, they were not in the number of the sheep whom Peter is here bid to feed; or did all pastors receive commission from Peter to feed Christ's sheep? Did St Paul, who so solemnly declares he had his commission "*not from man, neither by man?*" (Gal. i. 1.) Did any of the Bishops of Asia?—No. Paul assures us, the Holy Ghost had made them overseers of the flock of Christ, (Acts xx. 28.) "No (saith Ambrose, *De Dign. Sacerd.* p. 336.) not Peter only, *sed nos cum eo*, but we with him have received commission to feed Christ's sheep;" and "what is here said to Peter, feed my sheep, *ad*

omnes dicitur, is said to all," (says St Austin, *De Agone Christ.* c. 30.) "and (says St Basil,) Christ here gave *the same power* to all ensuing pastors and teachers." *Constit. Mon.* c. 22.

If it be enquired "to what purpose was this three-fold question and charge to Peter?" Not for the purpose of advancing him to a higher dignity than the rest, but, on the contrary, as a mark of *inferiority and reproach*. It is observable, that the honourable name of Peter is here dropped, and that of Simon substituted in its place, which doubtless carried some reproach with it. The question *three times* put, insinuates a distrust of him, and was occasioned by his thrice denying and at last forswearing Christ; the charge three times given, savours strongly of the same, and St Peter's being grieved at the repetition shews undeniably that in this sense he understood it. And this also clears up the words of Christ immediately following, (ver. 18.) Here therefore, as I said, there is nothing of superiority of power, nor of honour given to Peter, but of inferiority and reproach. None other of the apostles were questioned in the same manner, or received such reiterated, and therefore such distrustful charges to go forth and preach the gospel.— "In that speech of our Lord, "feed my sheep" (says St Cyril,) there was a kind of *renewal* of the apostleship formerly bestowed on him, doing away the infamy of his fall, and blotting out the cowardice of human infirmity." Cyril does not here say that our Lord *augmented* his dignity (which is the new doctrine,) but that he *renewed* it, or *restored* him to it. Which dignity he had said, in the beginning of this discourse, Peter was advanced into, when our Lord named him not *præ aliis*, above others, but *cum aliis*,

with other disciples to be an apostle ; and therefore did not now give him more than the rest, but only declared, he did not take the forfeiture he had made of that dignity, but reinstated him in it, together with the rest.

These *metaphorical* speeches then, which I have examined, are the whole *direct* evidence by which the principal Romish writers support this lofty structure; and I leave it to the unprejudiced reader to judge, whether they are sufficient to establish the least authority of Peter over the other apostles, much less that extravagant claim raised on them by the pretended infallible Councils of Florence and Trent.

II. I come now to examine those great privileges granted to Peter, “ which (as they say) plainly point at his supremacy over the other apostles.” They tell us that “ Peter’s name is *always* placed first.” This is false, (See John i. 44.—Gal. ii. 9.—1 Cor. iii. 22.—1 Cor ix. 5.—1 Cor. i. 12.) And although we grant that Peter was first in *order* or *place*, yet it will not follow that he had a supremacy of *power*.” This is plain from experience; for instance, the peers of England take place according to their several degrees, and the seniority of their creation : yet none will imagine that the first peer has a supremacy of *jurisdiction* over all the rest. And, for the same reason, it is of no service to their cause to allege “ that the act of first preaching the gospel to the Gentiles was performed by Peter,—that he spoke first to urge the necessity of filling up the place of Judas,—or that he accused Ananias and Sapphira of falsehood,” &c. This only proves that he was, in the beginning, spokesman or prolocutor of the apostles, *i. e.* that he had a *primacy* of *order* (which we have been always very willing to

grant,) but by no means implies, that he was invested with a *supremacy of jurisdiction* over the rest.—It is alleged also, “that Paul went to visit Peter, and abode with him fifteen days,” (Gal. xviii.) And what then? Does a visit from Paul suppose a man universal governor? If so, then James was universal governor, for Paul went to James when all the Presbyters were present, and moreover gave him a particular account of his ministry, (Acts xxi. 18.) Again they say, that “he spoke first in the Council of Jerusalem.” But the scriptures assert, that “*when there had been much disputing, Peter said to them.*” —Lastly, they allege “that he walked on the sea, that his name was changed, that he taught the people out of a ship,” &c.—It is certainly (says Bishop Potter) an argument that their cause is very defenceless, when they have recourse to such weak proofs for the support of an article which, in their scheme of religion, is essential to the constitution of the christian church.

I might add here, that some of the other apostles had very peculiar privileges, and some of them of much greater consequence than those of Peter; but I shall not insist on such trifles. In like manner, it is very frivolous to allege the titles given by the Fathers (particularly St Jerom) to Peter, as a proof of authority, since we may observe with Dr Barrow, 1. That such turgid eulogies on Peter are not found in the more ancient Fathers, as Clemens Romanus, Irenæus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, Cyprian, Firmilian, &c. 2. That they adorn other apostles with the like titles, equalling those of Peter. 3. That the Fathers, by calling Peter prince, &c. of the apostles, do not mean authority over them, may be argued from their generally joining Paul with him in the same ap-

pellations. 4. If any of the apostles might claim a supremacy over the rest, James appears to have the best title thereto, for "Jerusalem was the mother of all churches," (Hæron. *in Isa.* 2.) and "James first received the Episcopal chair, and to him our Lord first entrusted his own throne upon earth." Epiphan. *Hæc.* 78.—See Barrow's *Works*, I. 592.

I shall take notice in this place of a passage from Jerom, on which the Romanists place great dependance. "One of the twelve is elected, that a head being constituted, an occasion of schism might be taken away," (*Adv. Jovin. c.* 27.)—*Answer.* In the words immediately preceding, Jerom has the following: "But thou sayest that the church is founded on Peter, although the very same in another place is done upon *all* the apostles, and they all receive the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and the strength of the church is solidly established on them *equally*;" consequently, by "the appointment of one to prevent schism," he cannot possibly mean any other primacy than a primacy of *order*, and such as is among equals, and not any supremacy of *power* over them. And certainly (says Bishop Stillingfleet,) you think the apostles very unruly, who would not be kept in order by such a primacy as this, unless Peter had full jurisdiction over them. And so far are we from seeing such a *supremacy of power*, as you challenge to the Pope, to be necessary for preventing schisms, that we are sufficiently convinced, that the *usurping* of it hath caused one of the greatest ever was in the christian world. If then Jerom affirms, that "the firmness of the church is established on them all *equally*," then not more eminently on Peter than the rest. And though he gives the first place to Peter, "by reason of his age," yet

he tells us, "that he was only an apostle," and that John was on several accounts to be preferred before him, "for John was both an apostle, and an evangelist, and a prophet," (*Ibid.*) And, when he calls Peter, *princeps apostolorum*, he explains it so as to exclude all pretence to authority over them: "For as Plato (says he,) was the princeps of the philosophers, so Peter was of the apostles," (*Adv. Pelag. B. I. c. 2.*) Now I appeal to any one, whether Plato had dominion over the rest of the philosophers. The most, then, that Jerom could mean, was no more than this, that Peter was the *first* of the apostles, *princeps* and *primus* in ancient authors being words of the same signification, and this primacy of order we never denied to Peter.

And now, reader, thou hast all the scripture proofs which they are able to adduce for the supremacy of St Peter; and how wonderful is that delusion which can cause them to receive this for a truth, and found almost the whole of christianity upon it? But indeed, if they had really contained any thing which, by fair inference might be construed to give a superiority to Peter, this is so guarded against by the whole tenor of scripture, that it could never, with any show of reason, be ultimately maintained.

I. *There is not the least mention in scripture, of a supreme governor over the whole church, but many strong intimations to the contrary; and if God had designed St Peter and his successors to be "the true Vicars of Christ and heads of the whole church, the fathers and doctors of all christians; and that the full power of feeding, ruling, and governing the whole church was given to them in Peter by Christ," (as the Council of Florence defines,) and that the belief of this point is*

necessary to salvation, it may reasonably be supposed that he would have expressly declared it, it being a point of the greatest importance of all that concerns the administration of his church.

On the contrary, it is evident beyond a doubt that neither Peter nor any other apostle had any power or authority over the rest ; but that they all enjoyed an equality in this respect, under the supreme and only head of the church, Jesus Christ. When they were first separated from the rest of our Lord's followers, they were *all* distinguished by the same common name of *apostles*, and there was not the least difference in their commission or instructions. Afterwards they were *all* equally commanded to commemorate our Lord's death, and received the same authority to "*teach and baptise all nations,*" to "*remit and retain sins,*" and to execute all parts of the *apostolic* office ; and the Holy Spirit descended on them *all* without any distinction, and "*sat upon each of them.*"

As they were admitted to the same office, so they were *all* of the *same order*, there being no order above that of an apostle. For when Christ ascended on high, "*he gave, first apostles,*"—again, "*And he gave some apostles, some prophets, &c. for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith,*" (Eph. iv. 13.—1 Cor. xii. 27.) And certainly, if the apostles were *all first*, it is very probable that none of them was *before* the rest. And it is to be particularly remarked, that St Paul in this place speaks of the unity of the whole church in one body, and of the compact communion of the saints and the faithful ; which necessarily required that he should speak of the *head*, which joins and keeps that body in unity, if God had appointed such a head in his church. Again, "*twelve*

thrones" were appointed without any difference, in which they should "*judge the twelve tribes of Israel.*" Some of these, indeed, must of necessity be nearer to the royal throne of Christ than others; and consequently, the persons who sit in them must be superior in place to the rest: and this was the honour to which James and John aspired, when they desired to "*sit, one on our Lord's right hand, and the other on his left,*" but they were all to be placed in the *same* rank and order, and none exalted above the rest. And we may fairly conclude from this request of James and John, that none of Christ's disciples imagined he had promised the supremacy to Peter by those words, "*Thou art Peter,*" &c. for then neither would these two persons have desired it, nor would the rest have contended for it afterwards, (Luke xxii. 24.) Besides, all the ten were equally moved with indignation at this request, thinking it an injury to them *all*.

If we consider the PRACTICE of the apostles in the administration of spiritual affairs, we shall find that none of them pretended to exercise any authority over the rest; but they all acted with the same power, and had an equal share in the management of ecclesiastical matters. And we require you (says Bishop Bramhall) to prove, that St Peter ever exercised a single act of *jurisdiction* over the rest of the apostles, more than they over him, besides, and over and above his primacy of *order*.—And, 1st, of their transactions while they lived together at Jerusalem. We do not find any one instance of *appeal* to Peter, even in matters of the greatest *difficulty* and *importance*. When there was a vacancy in the college of apostles, Peter was not desired to fill it with some worthy person. It is true we have his speech, but there is not the least

air of authority in it. We are told that "*they* (viz. Peter and all the rest, about 120) *appointed two*."—On the day of Pentecost "*Peter stood up with the eleven*," to preach to the multitude; they who then received the faith applied themselves to Peter and "*the rest of the apostles*," to know what they should do,—and after they were baptised, "*continued in the doctrine and fellowship*," not of Peter only or any other, but of all "*the apostles*," (Acts ii. 14. 37.)—They who sold their possessions for the use of the church, laid the price at the feet of all "*the apostles*, who distributed to every man according as he had need."—The appointment of the deacons was managed by the "*twelve*" who called the disciples, and directed them "to look out seven men, whom *we* (said they) *may appoint*," and all without any particular direction or special commission from Peter. And, after having chosen them, "*they set them before the apostles; who, when they had prayed, laid hands on them*," (vi. 2. 6.)—When the apostles had heard that Samaria had received the word of God, (Acts viii. 14.) Peter did not order some of the apostles to go and instruct them, &c. but, on the contrary, "*the apostles sent to them Peter and John*."

It now remains to be considered, in what manner the apostles governed the church, and maintained its unity, when they left Jerusalem. And, in the first place, lest the mother-church of Jerusalem should be destitute of a Bishop, James was appointed to this office; but whether this was done by our Lord's express order, or by the free election of the apostles, is not agreed. In the important transaction which took place about that time at Jerusalem, about the observance of Mosaical institutions, there are several

remarkable facts, which are decisive against Peter's supremacy over the church. They did not *appeal* to *Peter* as the judge of controversies, but sent to "*the Apostles and Presbyters*" at Jerusalem. 2. Peter neither *called* this assembly, nor did he *preside* in it. 3. Peter delivers his judgment as one who was a *member* of the assembly ; but James speaks with *authority*, and his sentence is decisive, "*I judge,*" or "*my sentence is,*" says James. 4. Peter did not send his legates to Antioch, to signify what he and the whole council had decreed, but "*the Apostles and Presbyters, and the whole church*" appointed and sent their messengers. 5. The letters which are directed to the Gentile churches, are inscribed thus : "*The Apostles, Presbyters, and brethren send greeting,*" &c. without any mention of Peter, the supposed judge of this and other controversies, and the supposed governor of these and of all other churches.

Of the proceedings of the greatest part of the other apostles, or of the churches founded by them, the scriptures give us little information ; but if we may judge of the rest by St Paul, it is certain they exercised the authority which our Lord gave them, without any *dependence* on Peter, or any other apostle, and preserved the unity of the church not by being all subject to one visible head on earth, but by maintaining the same faith and worship, and living in a friendly correspondence and intercourse with their fellow-apostles.—" And (as Dr Barrow very judiciously observes) it was indeed most requisite, that every apostle should have a *complete, absolute, independent* authority in managing the concerns and duties of his office, that he might not in any wise be obstructed in the discharge of them,—not clogged with a need to consult

others,—not hampered with orders from those who were at a distance, and could not well descry what was fit in every place to be done. The direction of him who had promised to be *perpetually present with them*, and by his Holy Spirit to guide, to instruct, to admonish them upon all occasions, was abundantly sufficient. They did not want any other conduct or aid beside that special light and powerful influence of grace, which they received from him, which did (according to St Paul, 2 Cor. iii. 5.) “*render them sufficient ministers of the New Testament.*” Accordingly, their discourse and practice do thoroughly savour of such an *independence*, nor in them is there any appearance of that being true which Bellarmin dicateth, that “the apostles depended on Peter as on their head and commander.”

St Paul, in particular, we find every where asserts his independence on all others but Christ. He not only affirms that he received his commission “*neither of men, nor by men,*” that is, neither from men as the first authors of it, nor by their choice and designation, but from Jesus Christ, who personally appeared to him for this purpose, (Gal. i. 1.) but he tells us farther, that “*the gospel of uncircumcision was committed to him, as the gospel of circumcision was to Peter,*” (Gal. ii. 7.) that is, as Peter was by the direction of the Holy Spirit, sent to convert the dispersed Jews, so he himself, by the same direction and authority, was sent to the Gentiles, on which account he calls himself in other places the “*apostle of the Gentiles,*” (Rom. xi. 13. xv. 15. 16.) After having received his commission from Christ, he immediately applied himself vigorously to the work, without consulting or taking licence from any man: “*Immediately I conferred not with*

flesh and blood, neither went I up to Jerusalem to them that before me were apostles," (Gal. i. 16. 17.) And so far was he from depending on Peter, that when Peter dissembled with the Jews, he publicly reproved him, and "*withstood him to the face,"* (Gal. ii. 11. 14.) And in order to signify his absolute independence in the execution of his office, he affirms (and in a manner boasts) himself to be "*inferior in nothing to the very chiefest apostles ;*" (who were, "*James, Peter, and John,"* Gal. ii. 9.) in nothing, that is, in nothing belonging to the *authority*, or substantial dignity of his place, for as to his *personal merit*, he professeth himself "*much less than the least of the apostles,"* (2 Cor. xii. 11. 5.) but as to the authority of his office, equal to the greatest ; "*being by the grace of God what he was ; a minister of the gospel, according to the gift of the grace of God, which was given him according to the effectual working of his power,"* Eph. iii. 7.

The independence not of Paul only, but of all the apostles on Peter or any other apostle, is clearly evinced by their acts. Paul and Barnabas were first sent forth to convert the Gentiles, by the particular command of the Holy Ghost, (Acts xiii. 2. 4.) and performed the functions of apostles, confirming the disciples in various countries, ordaining Presbyters in every church, and preaching the word of truth, without the least mention of Peter, or of the necessity of adhering to him, as the centre of unity, (Acts xiv. 21. 23.) On their second departure from Jerusalem they received no particular instructions from Peter ; —when they disputed at Antioch, Peter was not appealed to for the decision of their disputes, but both acted independently of any apostle, and "*departed asunder one from another,"* Barnabas to Cyprus and Paul

“through Syria and Cilicia confirming the churches,” (Acts **xv.** 36. 39. **xvi.** 4. **xviii.** 18. 23. **xix.** 21. **xx.** 4. 17. **xxviii.** 30.) In establishing churches, appointing Bishops over them, (1 Tim. i. 3.—2 Tim. ii. 2. Tit. i. 5.) and correcting irregularities; Paul professed to act merely by his own authority: *Therefore, being absent, I write these things, that being present I may not use severity, according to the authority which the Lord hath given me, to edification and not to destruction,* (2 Cor. **xiii.** 10. **x.** 8.)

It may be farther observed with respect to the apostolic method of governing and preserving the unity of the church, that although every apostle exercised a *particular authority* over the churches which he had planted, yet they had all a *general concern* for the whole church of Christ. This accounts for the difference between such of Paul's epistles as were written to churches converted by himself, and those to others. To the former he writes in a style of command and authority, exclusive of all others, (1 Cor. **iv.** 14. 15. 16. 21. **ix.** 2.—2 Cor. **x.** 6. 7.—1 Thess. **ii.** 7. 11. **iv.** 2.—2 Thess. **iii.** 4. 6. 10. 12.—Phil. **iii.** 17.) but the latter he only exhorts, and persuades, and entreats, (Eph. **i.** 1. **iii.** 3: 7.) And in this latter sense it is, that Paul declares *“the care of all the churches came upon him daily.”* Such was the method of preserving the unity of the Catholic Church in the time of the apostles.

It does not appear from the proceedings of the apostles that they acknowledged the superior authority of Peter, and depended on him as their head.—Let us examine now whether they *inculcated* it on their converts in their epistles. The apostles (says the learned Bishop Morton,) in their epistles, are ur-

gent in inveighing against the heresies of Judaism, (Gal. i. 8.—Col. ii. (Sadducism,) 1 Cor. 15.) of worship of angels, (Col. ii.) against apostacy, (2 Thess. ii. —2 Tim. iv. 3. and Jude,) against divisions and schisms, (1 Cor. xi.) and abuse of ecclesiastical orders, (Rom. xii.—Eph. iv. 11.—1 Cor. xii.) and yet in all these there appeareth not one syllable or iota to prove your article of “the Catholic Roman Church, without union and subjection to which, and to the head thereof, there is no salvation.” No, nor yet so much as to intimate any one of the parts of this article; as, 1st, Not to signify that the Church of Rome was a Catholic, much less the Catholic Church, as being in right (which you say,) “The mother and mistress of all churches;” nor that in the convincing of heretics, christians ought to look to the faith of the Roman Church; nor that for the preventing of schisms, christians ought to be united to the Bishop of Rome. All which those holy apostles, without doubt, ought, and would have done, if (according to the *now* Roman faith,) either the name, Catholic, had been appropriated to Rome, or that the necessity of union and subjection to the authority of the same head had been so necessary, as “without which no christian could be saved *.”

On the contrary, this is no where asserted or intimated in the whole scriptures,—no, not even in the large epistle to the Romans themselves. St Peter himself wrote two Catholic epistles, and although he

* See *The Grand Imposture of the (now) Church of Rome manifested in this one Article of the new Roman Creed, viz. The Roman Church, &c. without union to which there is no salvation, proved to be New, False, Schismatical, Heretical, &c. by Thomas Morton, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry.* Lond. 1628.

earnestly enjoins us to “*obey the king as supreme, to honour the Presbyters, and obey the governors*” of particular churches, yet the honour and obedience due to himself in particular and his successors, are passed over in perfect silence, as if no such thing had been thought of. But, if Peter had actually been supreme head of the church, he could by no means have neglected to mention it, without exceeding injury to his place and government (if he had any such,) because it belongs to every one in his degree to maintain and magnify the dignity of his ministry, as Paul teaches, saying “*I will magnify mine office, in as much as I am apostle of the Gentiles.*” Upon which text, Gregory Bishop of Rome collects a general lesson for the defence of his own jurisdiction. “The apostle (says he,) teaches us to carry humility in our hearts, that we preserve the dignity of that order whereunto we are called,” (*Epist. 36. Lib. IV.*) But where does Peter assume a higher dignity or title than that of apostle? 1 Peter i.—2 Peter i.

Dr Hawarden endeavours to apologise for the silence observed by the sacred writers, especially St Luke, respecting St Peter’s supremacy*. But his arguments are extremely trifling. He says “St Chrysostom has already told us, that Peter shewed his supremacy.” But where have the scriptures shewn it to us? He says that “the twelve first chapters of the Acts give us only a short account of what the apostles did in the first year after our Saviour’s passion, with the conversion of St Paul, the baptism of Cornelius, and five or six things besides, and that the remainder

* *Hawarden’s True Church of Christ shewn*, II. p. 49. Edit. Dub. 1808.

relates only to St Paul, and that St Luke's design was chiefly to relate the labours of St Paul." But why has St Luke omitted to mention this, while relating the many transactions in which Peter was engaged in the first fifteen chapters of the Acts?—Why has he related other things of infinitely less importance?—And why not mention Paul's subjection and appeals to "the Vicar of Jesus Christ?" But we are told that "St Luke might, if he pleased, have omitted it altogether?" But where has he mentioned it *at all*? He tells Theophilus, that he had "*a perfect understanding of all things from the very first,*" and wrote the acts of our Saviour and his apostles, that he might "*know the certainty of those things wherein he had been instructed,*" (Luke i. 3. 4.—Acts i. 2.); but nowhere relates that Christ made Peter his Vicar, or the acts of his pretended Vicar; but does in the next verse tell us in effect the direct contrary, where he speaks of his charges to his *apostles* whom he had chosen, (Acts i. 2.) His last argument amounts to this, "The sacred writings have little or nothing concerning the subordination of Priests to Bishops, and never inform us that the civil governor is head of the church in his dominions, and therefore we may as well reject them as the supremacy of Peter."—*Answer*: The subordination of Priests to Bishops is plainly set forth in scripture, as I have already proved. We do not maintain that the civil governor is head of the church in his dominions. A moderate supremacy we consider expedient in certain cases, but by no means necessary. In short, Peter's supremacy is either not contained in scripture, or it is. If it is not (as Dr H. is somewhat inclined to think,) it cannot be necessary, and therefore we lawfully reject it. If it is, it

remains for them to give us some *plain* and *evident* proofs of it.

Upon the whole then, they have not the least proof from scripture for the supremacy of St Peter, but we have from thence the fullest confutation of it. It is of such consequence, that we ought to demand the *clearest* attestations for it ; but all that can be found in scripture about it, is but one manifest contradiction of it. And here the very argument upon which the Pope's power is founded reverts most strongly against them. There was no such government of the church in the *apostles'* time, and therefore there is no such *now* ; and the Bishop of Rome's pretending to this power, when he had no right to it, will be but another argument of his presumption and falsehood, by which he hath so wretchedly imposed upon a credulous and deluded world *.

* *Leffius' Controversy between the Churches of Rome and England.*
Dub. 1770, p. 123.

CHAP. III.

THE SUPREMACY OF THE BISHOP OF ROME CONFUTED
FROM THE PRIMITIVE FATHERS, WITH AN ACCOUNT OF
THE PRIMITIVE METHOD OF PRESERVING THE UNITY
OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

I PROCEED next to present the reader with a brief account of the method, in which the Bishops immediately succeeding the apostles, preserved the unity of the church, not, as I shall shew, by ruling their respective churches in subjection to one visible head, but in maintaining a friendly correspondence and intercourse with each other.

However, I must beg the reader to observe, that (even granting the Bishop of Rome to be the successor of St Peter,) I have already proved that St Peter had no supremacy at all; and consequently, the pretended supremacy of the Bishop of Rome must of necessity fall to the ground. "The surest, if not the only method of our adversaries (as Dr Hawarden, a noted champion of the Church of Rome, maintains,) to cut off the Pope's supremacy, is by denying that of St Peter. For we cannot reasonably doubt, but our blessed Saviour instituted a form of government, which was always to remain in his church. To suppose he left it without any certain rule, or form of administration, would be a reflection on his wisdom, and to thwart his institution would be downright sacrilege. So that if St Peter's supremacy be overturned, this of his successors must necessarily fall,"

(*True Church of Christ*, II. p. 84.) The scriptures, therefore, in the opinion of this Romish divine, are perfectly sufficient to *decide* this controversy. This is true christian divinity. However, I have already engaged to prove, not only that the scriptures, but that the more ancient fathers, were decidedly of the opinion of the Reformed Episcopal Church. But even supposing that the contrary was maintained by the primitive writers, yet we are not bound to receive it as an *article* of the *catholic faith*, or is the belief of it to be owned as *necessary to salvation*, unless it appear to have been so taught by the apostles in the sacred writings, according to the golden article of our church. (Art. vi.)—To begin then at *the First Age*:

St IGNATIUS was Bishop of Antioch from A. D. 67 to A. D. 107. In his writings it no where appears that the unity of the Catholic Church consisted in *subjection* or *necessary* unity to the Bishop of Rome, or that the catholicism of churches depended on their adherence to the particular Roman Church. On the contrary, it is most apparent that its unity depended on the friendly correspondence which the Catholic Bishops and their churches maintained with one another. This accounts for Ignatius's epistles to the churches of the Ephesians, Magnesians, Trallians, ROMANS, Philadelphians, Smyrneans, and to Polycarp Bishop of the Smyrneans. In these epistles, he extols the dignity of Bishops to the highest pitch, and speaks of them "as appointed unto the utmost bounds of the earth," but never once mentions the *head* of the Catholic Church. For the prevention of *schisms* he repeatedly exhorts them to adhere to their orthodox Bishops, but is totally silent with respect to the pretended centre of unity in the successor of St Peter.

"Wheresoever the Bishop shall appear, there let the people also be; as where Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church." In his very epistle to the Romans, so far from yielding any deference to their Bishop, he does not even take notice of him. This epistle he inscribes "to the church which presides in the place of the region of the Romans," from whence this extraordinary inference has been drawn, "that *therefore* she is the head of all other churches." (De la Hogue *Tract. de Ecclesiâ*, p. 342.) Antioch is declared, in an imperial edict, (*Ap. Joh. Antiochenum*, p. 278.) to have "*presided in the East*," but no man will thence infer, that she was the head of all cities in the world. If, indeed, Ignatius had asserted, that the Church of the Romans had presided over all the churches in the world, it might have served their purpose, but he merely says, "which presided in the place of the country of the Romans." So Tertullian says, that "the chairs of the apostles are presided on in their places," *i. e.* have Bishops governing them.

CLEMENS Bishop of Rome (*i. e.* of the diocese of Rome, not of the whole Catholic Church,) wrote an epistle to the Church of Corinth then engaged in factions, in which the clergy were much affronted, wherein, like a good Bishop and christian brother, he earnestly persuades it by many inducements to peace, but no where speaks imperiously as the "true Vicar of Christ and head of the whole church." What a thundering bull (says Dr Barrow,) would a modern Pope have dispatched against outrageous contemners of the clergy? How often would he have spoken of the *apostolic See* and its *authority*? We should infallibly have heard him swagger in his usual style, "Whoever shall presume to oppose our will, let him

know, that he shall incur the indignation of Almighty God, and of his apostles Peter and Paul." And what an excellent opportunity had Clement of mentioning the prince of the apostles, where he speaks of the "mission of the apostles by Christ, their preaching through countries and cities, and appointing the first fruits of their conversion to be Bishops and ministers over such as should afterwards believe." But, with respect to such an officer in the church, he is totally silent.

THE APOSTOLIC CANONS describe the state of the church in very ancient times, though they were not compiled in the time of the apostles. In these the ranks, duties, and privileges of all ecclesiastical persons are declared, yet they never give the least intimation of this "Superintendent of the whole church," or his prerogatives, or the respect due to him; which is no less strange, than that there should be a body of laws, or description of the state of any kingdom, wherein nothing should be mentioned concerning the king or royal authority. They prescribe, "that the Priests and Deacons should do nothing without the consent of their Bishop, for with him the people of God are entrusted, and of him an account of their souls will be demanded." They prescribe that "the *Bishops of each province* should acknowledge him who is first among them (*i. e.* their Archbishop,) and esteem him as their *head*, and do nothing extraordinary without his consent; and that each should meddle only with those affairs that concerned his own diocese; and also that the Archbishop should not do any thing without the consent of all, that so there may be unity." Now what place could be more opportune to mention the *Pope's* jurisdiction over the whole church?—But

does not the canonist exclude it, assigning the supreme disposal (without farther resort,) of all things to the arbitration of the Bishops of each province, and placing the *maintenance of unity* in that course?

In all this age no trace is to be seen of the power of the Bishop of Rome beyond the limits of his own diocese,—no law given to the universal church,—no appeal from any church. All the churches founded immediately by the apostles, as those at Jerusalem, Thessalonica, Antioch, Rome, were known above all others, and were called the first and apostolic; and the churches that were planted by those first assumed the same title, and were much honoured. Of these, Tertullian (*Præscr. B. II.*) speaks thus: “They are *all first and apostolic*, while the communion of peace, and the name of brethren, and the common earnestness of hospitality shew the union that subsists among them all.” This age produced many heresies and schisms, as the Simonians, Cerinthians, Ebionites, Nicolaitans, &c. If the Bishop of Rome had been head and governor of the church, it was undoubtedly his office in particular, to have summoned these heretics, and condemned them by the authority invested in him as such; but of that not the least trace is found. Let it not be said, that there was no occasion to mention his supremacy, since it was then universally acknowledged; for the very existence of schisms and heresies shew that it was not then considered absolutely necessary to be united to the Bishop of Rome, in order to be in communion with the Catholic Church. The necessity of Episcopal government was then acknowledged by all parties, Catholics as well as Schismatics (for the very schismatics had their Bishops,) but the necessity of adhering to the Bishop of Rome by none.

In the *Second Age* there are some remarkable instances, that the communion of the Catholic Church was not to be taken from conjunction with the Bishop of Rome, as head of it. The case of Victor Bishop of Rome, and the Asian churches, which took place, A. D. 169. is the most remarkable. It is the first instance only which the advocates of Popery can produce, of the Bishop of Rome exercising any authority out of his own diocese; but so far is it from implying his supremacy (as they pretend,) that it is one of the clearest instances in antiquity against it.

When the controversy concerning Easter began to grow warm, there were several synods assembled concerning it, which are mentioned in the following order by Eusebius: "There is extant the epistle of the Synod in Palestine, over which Theophilus Bishop of Cæsarea, and Narcissus Bishop of Jerusalem presided,—another epistle of the Synod at Rome, having *Victor*, the *Bishop's* name prefixed to it,—another in Pontus over which Palmas presided,—and an epistle of the churches in France, over which Irenæus was Bishop," &c. and from them all together, not from the Bishop of Rome or his synod, proceeded the rule of celebrating Easter only on the Lord's day. This rule it is probable Victor, being the most eminent Bishop in the West, was desired to transmit to the Asiatic Bishops, in order to recommend them to, conform to the western custom. The Asiatics refused, and stated their reasons, in an epistle written and sent by Polycrates of Ephesus (one of the most respectable Bishops in the East,) to the Bishop and Church of Rome; which was so highly resented by Victor, that he immediately put into execution that which he seems to have threatened them with in his former letter to them, and "pronounces

them excommunicated." But this act of Victor did not put the Asiatic Bishops out of a state of salvation; and it was so far from being approved of by those Bishops, who agreed with him respecting the time of celebrating Easter, that they all fell upon him for this irregular and extravagant act, and "commanded him * to attend to those things that promote peace and unity among neighbours." "Moreover (says Eusebius,) their epistles are extant, wherein they have severely reprov'd Victor." This behaviour, I think, does not very clearly prove the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome; and this would certainly have been very unaccountable behaviour to Christ's *true* Vicar, who had "*full power of governing the whole church*," and who alone was able to judge what was fit to be done in such cases.

"But (says Natalis Alexander,) Irenæus does not deny Victor's power of excommunicating the Asiatic Bishops." It is true he does not, and, what is more, he could not, since every Bishop in the Catholic Church, and therefore the Bishop of Rome among the rest, might refuse to communicate with any other Bishop or church, against whom they thought they had sufficient reason for such suspension of communion. So, John Bishop of Antioch, in the Ephesian Synod, excommunicated Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria; and the African Bishops excommunicated Vigilius Bishop of Rome ("a catholicâ communione recludunt," Victor. Tunens. *Chronicon*. p. 10.) The name of Felix Bishop of Rome was expunged from the dip-tychs of the church by Acacius Patriarch of Constantinople, and Hilary anathematized Liberius an Arian

* Αρτιπαρεκλεινεται.

Bishop of the same place ; and if these excommunications did not argue just authority over the persons excommunicated, then neither could Victor's do it.

Farther, the power of excommunicating heretical or schismatical Bishops did not then consist in judging them by final and uncontrollable powers, as obliged all men to believe that to be heresy, which the accusers decreed to be so, and in which the accusers alone acted as judges, and the accused were esteemed totally incompetent to judge, because forsooth they were accused. No, the whole force and effects of excommunication lay in the sense of the church ; for by whomsoever the sentence was pronounced, if all other churches observed it (as most commonly they did, while the unity of the church remained entire,) then the persons excommunicated were out of the communion of the Catholic Church ; if not, then it was only the particular declaration of those Bishops who pronounced the sentence. And, in this case, the validity of Victor's excommunication of the Asiatic Bishops depended on the acceptance of it by other churches, but as they did not consent to it, he could not cast them out of the communion of the whole church ; but only declare, that if they came to Rome he would not admit them to communion in his diocese.

This action of Victor was so little regarded in the Catholic Church, that it does not appear that any christians refused to communicate with the Asiatic churches. Whence (says Bishop Morton,) it is manifest that a christian may have communion with the Catholic Church elsewhere throughout the world, notwithstanding the excommunication of the Bishop of Rome ; and therefore the Roman Church cannot be called the head, whereunto all others ought to pro-

fess *union* and yield *subjection*. And it is to be remarked, that *in defiance* of this decree of Victor, the Asiatic Bishops retained their own customs until the year 325, when the Council of Nice rendered the time of celebrating Easter the same in all churches, and this too, without any mention of Victor, and without any regard to his authority. So much for the first instance produced to prove the *constant exercise* of the Bishop of Rome's universal jurisdiction.

The second proof alleged by the Romanists from the Fathers of the second century, is a passage in the works of the above-mentioned IRENÆUS, Bishop of Lyons. In his Book against heresies, endeavouring to prove that the apostolic tradition had been preserved entire in all the churches in the world, he thus proceeds :—" Because it would be *endless* to trace up the succession of *all* the churches, we allege the tradition which that greatest and very ancient church, (known to all, founded and established at Rome by the two most glorious apostles Peter and Paul,) has received from the apostles, and the faith announced to all, coming down to us by the succession of Bishops. For to this church it is necessary that every church, this is, the faithful who are round about should resort, on account of the more powerful principality, in which the apostolic tradition has always been preserved by those that are round about."

Now, I defy the acutest Romanist to extract any other privilege from the above celebrated passage than this, viz. That the Church of Rome (that is, merely the diocese comprehending the city,) being one of the most ancient in the world, and one of the most illustrious, being founded by the two most distinguished apostles, and the most frequented (as in-

cluding the metropolis of world,) was the fittest for Irenæus's design to prove to mankind that its succession had been uninterrupted, and that the apostolic tradition had continued pure till his time. There is not a word concerning the supremacy of its Bishop; and it is quite impertinent in our adversaries to urge the excellent and deserved testimonies given by Irenæus to the *then* Roman Church (*i. e.* diocese,) in favour of the *modern* one, unless they can prove that it retains the same pure faith and worship which it professed in the time of Irenæus, and contains within its compass the most powerful and frequented city in the world.

But it will be replied, "Does not Irenæus declare that it is necessary that all churches should agree with this (particular) Church of Rome, on account of its more powerful principality, *i. e.* the supremacy of its Bishop?" I answer:—1st, He says no such thing.—2d, He attributes no more authority to that church, than he does to the other apostolic churches.

1. Irenæus does not say, that all churches must agree with the Roman on account of its more powerful principality, but "it is necessary that every church, that is, the faithful who are round about, should *resort* to it, on account of the more powerful principality." Now this *potentior principalitas* (which is a phrase never used in church polity,) is not that of the church, but of the *city of Rome*, because (says Richer on this passage, *Hist. Concil.* I. p. 5.) "Rome was the imperial city of the world, and the seat of the Roman empire;" and also being the seat of the senate and chief judicatures, it must have caused, not whole churches, but "the faithful round about" (as he ex-

plains omnem ecclesiam,) to *resort* to it, and therefore made this church a *most visible* and *eminent* church, and well known to all the world, and consequently best suited to answer his design against the heretics, of reckoning up *one church* at least, which preserved the pure apostolic tradition *.

II. He attributes no more authority to the Roman Church, than he does to other apostolic churches.—

*The original stands thus:—"Ad hanc ecclesiam, propter potentior principalitatem, necesse est omnem Convenire ecclesiam, id est, omnes qui sunt undique fideles." Convenire, which, in the original, was probably *συνερχομαι*, cannot here signify agreement or assent, for which we say *Convenit mihi tecum*, not *Ego convenio ad te*, and Irenæus does not say *convenire cum hac*, but *ad hanc*. Our sense of the entire passage is supported by the ancient writers.—The 9th Canon of Council of Antioch, decrees that "the Bishop in every province should acknowledge his metropolitan, propterea quod ad metropolin omnes undique concurrunt, quibus sunt negotia;" and of Constantinople, Gregory Naz. says almost literally the same thing as Irenæus had done two centuries before, "Εἰς ἣν παστέχουσι ἀντα συνερχομαι, καὶ ὅθεν ἀρχαὶ δόξης ἡμῶν καὶ τῆς πίστεως," (Vol. I. p. 517.) "To which the people from the farthest parts of the world run together, and from whence, as from a common emporium of the faith, they take their rise" (or direction.) This passage from Gregory is cited in Grabe's note on this text, and observe, the latter Popish editor Massuet, who professes to answer Grabe, passes it over in perfect silence.

Now, if it was not for the sake of business that people resorted to Rome, I ask, for what purpose did they go thither? Not for the Catholic *faith*, for that Irenæus assures us every one had at home: "The apostles, after they had planted the churches, delivering to them the true *faith*," which was *then* preserved by them inviolably, as he assures us (Lib. III. c. 3.) Not for *discipline*, for "in the several churches which they planted, the apostles ordained Bishops, delivering to them (suum ipsorum locum majestarii,) their own place and power of jurisdiction." And therefore there was no necessity to go to Rome, either for faith or discipline.

For, in mentioning the Roman Church in particular, he consulted his own ease, since he shews that he might have proved his tradition from all other apostolic churches, “ Valde longum esset enumerare ecclesias;” and towards the end of the chapter he names the succession of Bishops in the “ churches of Smyrna and Ephesus, and all the churches of Asia, as witnesses of the same tradition.” Either therefore, our adversaries must maintain that he conceived the testimony of other apostolic churches divine and infallible (which he certainly did not, neither do they pretend that he did; and if he had, the confessed errors and heresies which they fell into afterwards, would demonstrate plainly that he erred,) or else that he conceived the testimony of the Roman Church only human and credible, though perhaps more credible than any one church besides, for the reasons already mentioned. Now, if Irenæus thought the testimony of the Roman Church only *human* and *fallible*, then surely he could never think that *adhering* to it was a certain *mark* of a Catholic, or *separation* from it a certain mark of an Heretic. Besides, had Irenæus thought that all churches must of necessity agree with the Roman, and that she was an infallible preserver of tradition, how could he and all other Bishops have then pronounced that to be no sufficient ground of excommunication, which Victor and his adherents believed to be so? Therefore, he did not believe that the particular Roman Church was a sufficient and infallible judge of what was universal tradition, and what was not;—of what was necessary to be believed and done, and what not;—what was a sufficient ground of excommunication, and what not.

The ancient heretics and their opinions have been

accurately described by the same Irenæus, Epiphanius, &c. but where do we find in their writings, that these heretics were condemned for disobeying the Bishop or Church of Rome? Or where is the *necessity* of *adhering* to that church in particular, recommended to them? Or can it be shewn, that the term *Roman Catholic* was *then* used to distinguish the Catholic from the Heretic? No such thing; every orthodox Bishop was in those times a centre of unity, and appeals for the truth of doctrine were made as well to the churches of Smyrna, Ephesus, and all the churches of Asia, as to that of Rome.

About this time flourished DIONYSIUS Bishop of Corinth. His letters to the Church of the Lacedæmonians, Athenians, Gnosians, Cretans, ROMANS, and to that in Pontus, &c. plainly evince the concern which every Bishop then had for the faith, and the weakness of the argument brought for the Bishop of Rome's supremacy, from his writing similar epistles to churches out of his own diocese. See *Euseb. Hist. Eccl.* B. IV. c. 23. and B. II. c. 25.

In the beginning of the *Third Century* lived TERTULLIAN, who in his *Apology*, p. 39. thus describes the unity of the church in his time: "We are one body by agreement in religion, by our unity of discipline, and our being in the same covenant of hope;" and in his *Præscriptions*, p. 19. that it consisted "in adhering to that doctrine which was first preached by the apostles, who, having first delivered it in Judea, and planted churches there, went and declared the same to other nations, and settled churches in cities, from whence other churches have the same doctrine propagated to them, and are therefore called *apostolic churches*, as the offspring of those that were founded

by them. Therefore, so many and so great churches are all that ONE first apostolic church, from which all are divided. Thus they are all first and apostolic whilst they maintain the same unity;—whilst there is the communion of peace, title of brotherhood, and common mark of hospitality.” Wherein we see that which made churches, in Tertullian’s sense, APOSTOLIC, was the embracing and continuing in that doctrine, which was first delivered by the apostles; and thus churches, though remote from the apostles’ times, may have the denomination of apostolic, from their agreement in doctrine with those that were founded by them; and that which made them the ONE CHURCH of CHRIST, was by agreement in religion, unity of discipline, and being in the same covenant of hope; but here is not the least mention of the unity of the churches consisting in adherence and subjection to the Bishop of Rome.

It is urged by Challoner, that “Tertullian confutes all the prevailing heresies of those days by the doctrine of the Church of Rome.” Granting that he did, yet what relation has this to the Bishop of Rome’s supremacy? It will only prove that the particular church or diocese of Rome was *then* a competent and credible witness of tradition, but not that it was *always* to continue such, or that it was to be the centre of doctrine as well as of *jurisdiction*, unless our adversaries can prove that Christ has made it infallible.—Probably they will assert its infallibility on the ground of Christ’s promise to be “*always with his apostles to the end of the world.*” But were there no successors of the apostles but at Rome? How comes this promise to be limited to the particular Church of Rome, and the Bishops of Jerusalem, Antioch, and the other

eastern churches, not to enjoy the equal benefit of it? And if these churches have failed in delivering genuine tradition, as the Romanists assert, then may the Church of Rome fail, and consequently err. But does Tertullian say that all heresies were then confuted by the tradition of the Church of Rome *only*?—No. Let us hear his own words: “Go now, run over the apostolic churches, in which to this day the chairs of the apostles are presided on, in which their authentic epistles are recited. Is Achaia near thee? There thou hast (the Church of) Corinth. If thou art not far from Macedonia, there thou hast (the Church of) Philippi. If thou canst go into Asia, thou hast (the Church of) Ephesus. But if thou be adjacent to Italy, thou hast Rome, whose authority is near at hand to us (in Africa, for Tertullian was an African,) happy church, to which the apostles poured forth all their doctrine with their blood,” (*Præscript*, c. 36. compare *Adv. Marc.* IV. c. 5.) Now might not this place have been urged by a Corinthian, or a Philippian, or an Ephesian, that in Tertullian’s judgment separation from any of their churches was a certain mark of heresy, as justly as this is alleged to vindicate this privilege to the Roman Church only.—If therefore, our adversaries stand to Tertullian’s judgment, they must either grant the authority of the Roman Church to be but a fallible guide, as well as that of Ephesus, Corinth, &c. or they must maintain the infallibility of them *all*; for although he gives an honourable testimony to the Church of Rome, yet in point of direction he makes them *all equal*.

I proceed to the testimony of the illustrious martyr St CYPRIAN, “who (says Dr Field,) of all others

most clearly overthrows the error of the Romanists, touching the Papacy."

In his book of the Unity of the Church, he teaches us that there is but "one Episcopacy, part of which every Bishop holds with full authority and power *," by which he means, that each Bishop possesses a part of this universal Episcopacy, which he has *in solidum*, i. e. he has his part to govern with the fulness and plenitude of Episcopal power, without any superiority or jurisdiction over him. In the same manner he says, (*Ep. 53.*) "That as there is one church divided into many members throughout the whole world, so there is one Episcopacy, diffused by the united multitude of many Bishops."—Again (in *Ep. 67.*) "Although we are many pastors, yet we feed one flock, and we ought to collect and cherish all the sheep which Christ hath purchased with his blood."

Another principle is, that each *Bishop*, with his *clergy* and *laity*, form a *complete church*, possessing all necessary *authority within itself*, and over which no Bishop or College of Bishops have a direct authority, to compel it to submit to their decrees against its judgment and conscience. He defines "a church to consist of a *Bishop, his clergy, and the laity*, (*Quando Ecclesia in episcopo, et clero, et in omnibus stantibus sit constituta.*" (See Goulart on this passage, *Ep. 62.*) "So that if any are not with the Bishop, they are not in the church," and that "from thence heresies spring, that the Bishop who is one and is set over the church, is contemned by the proud presumption of some," (*Ep. 66.*)

* "Episcopatus unus est, cujus á singulis in solidum pars tenetur." (*Ep. 53.*) "Quam sic á Christo una Ecclesia per totum mundum in multa membra divisa, item Episcopatus unus Episcoporum multorum concordi numerositate diffusus."

In each church the Bishop was *subordinate to none*, but the great Bishop of Souls, *Jesus Christ* ; and there is nothing more fully, more plainly, or more frequently insisted on by Cyprian than this great principle. —1st, He lays the foundation of it in the *equality* which our Lord instituted among his *apostles*. “Christ (says he,) gave equal power to all his apostles when he said, as my Father sent me, so send I you ;” and again, “The rest of the apostles were the same that Peter was, endowed with an equal fellowship both of honour and power.” Now Bishops were, in Cyprian’s opinion, successors of the apostles ; consequently he founds the equality of Bishops, and therefore every Bishop’s supremacy within his own diocese, on the equality of the apostles.—2d, The *equality of Bishops*. In his epistle to Jubaianus : “These things, most dear brother, I have written to you as I was able, neither prescribing to nor imposing on any man, since every Bishop may do what he thinks fit, possessing the free power of his own will*.” In the same manner he concludes his epistle to Magnus. And what can be more clear or full than his excellent discourse at the opening of the Council of Carthage, A. D. 256? More than eighty Bishops were assembled, concerning baptism performed by heretics or schismatics. Cyprian was president ; and having represented to them the occasion of their meeting, he spoke in the following terms : “It remains now that each of us speak his sense freely, judging no man, refusing our communion to no man, though he should think otherwise. For none of us constitutes himself a Bishop of Bishops, or forces his colleagues to a necessity of obeying him

* “Unusquisque Episcoporum, quod putat faciat, habens arbitrii sui liberam potestatem.”

by a tyrannical terror ; since every Bishop has full power to determine for himself, and can no more be judged by others, than he can judge them. But we all wait for the judgment of Christ, who alone hath power to make us governors of his church, and to call us to an account for our administration *.” Moreover, by the principles of those times, every Bishop “had a primacy in his own church,” “managed the balance of her government,” was elevated to “the sublime summit of the priesthood,” “possessed the Episcopal authority in its vigour,” in its “plenitude,” and had a “sublime and divine power of governing the church.” Every Bishop was “head” of his own church, he and he only was her visible “judge,” and he did not stand subordinate to any visible superior†. In short, the constitution of every particular church was, in those times, a well-tempered monarchy ; the Bishop was the monarch, and the Presbytery his senate ; all the christians within his district depended on him for government and discipline, and he depended on no man.

Another grand principle of Cyprian is, that *all Bishops were colleagues*, and formed one college, which he calls the Episcopal College, or the one Episcopate. With respect to this, every Bishop, besides the su-

* Neque enim quisquam nostrum Episcopum se Episcoporum constituit, aut tyrannico terrore ad obsequendi necessitatem Collegas suas adigit ; quando habeat *omnis episcopus*, pro licentia *libertatis* et *potestatis suæ*, arbitrium proprium, tamque ab alio judicari non possit, quam nec ipse potest judicare : Sed expectemus universi iudicium Domini nostri Jesu Christi, qui *unus* et *solus* habet et potestatem et præponendi nos in Ecclesiæ suæ gubernatione et de actu nostro judicandi.

† See Ep. 69. 68. 55. 3. 59. Un. Eccles. 59.

preme government of his own diocese, had such a relation to the whole Catholic Church, that he was bound to give the christians of those churches, wherein the Bishops had turned heretics or schismatics, "the comfort of his aid and assistance," (*Ep.* 68.)

And this is the reason he gives, why there were so many Bishops in the christian church, (*Ep.* 67.) "that if any of our college should endeavour to broach any new heresy, or tear and spoil the flock of Christ, the rest may come to their aid, and like good and faithful pastors, collect again the sheep of Christ into their fold." Thus they could refuse the heretical or schismatical Bishop their communion, and thereby exclude him from the Episcopal College; and they could require all the christians within his district to abandon his communion, and choose another Bishop, as they valued the inestimable privileges of catholic communion. Transactions of this nature were, in those times, carried on in the Episcopal College by "communicatory letters." Thus, in those happy times, while the

- pure faith and worship were professed by a great majority of Bishops throughout the church, was catholic communion strictly preserved, and as Cyprian expresses himself, "united by the cement of Bishops, adhering closely together*," but, as I shall shew more fully hereafter, not consisting in a *necessary union* with the Bishop of Rome, much less in *subjection* to him.

* The expressions used by Cyprian with respect to this unity of the Episcopal body imply an union of *love* and *charity*, and no where of subjection to one visible head. Thus, *dilectio communis; mens juncta et individua concordia; pro charitate mutuâ, quâ nobis invicem cohæreamus*, writing to Cornelius Bishop of Rome; and see *Ep.* 30. on which Goulart has the following observation: *Locus de eximiâ illâ communione et mutuâ fraternaque orthodoxarum*

The first argument Cyprian makes use of to prove the unity of the church, is the unity of the apostolic office ; and assigns this as a reason why our Saviour in a particular manner committed the keys to Peter (when he gave the same power, *parem potestatem*, to the rest of the apostles, which he did to Peter,) viz. “ to manifest the unity ” (*ut unitatem manifestaret*,) of the apostolic office and power. “ Yet*, that he might manifest unity, he appointed one chair and one origin of unity beginning in one, for the rest of the apostles were the same that Peter was, endowed with an *equal fellowship both of honour and of power*, (*hoc utique erant et ceteri apostoli quod fuit Petrus, pari consortio præditi et honoris et potestatis* †,) but the beginning (*exordium*) is from unity ‡; and the

ecclesiarum charitate ; quæ infelici hoc nostro seculo indies evanescit : unde malorum Iliades.—The Bishop of Rome is repeatedly termed by Cyprian, his fellow-bishop and colleague ; and mark, *colleague* is never used to a *Presbyter*. The title *Papa* (which is now appropriated to the Bishop of Rome, and impertinently used to insinuate his supremacy,) was then common to all Bishops. Thus the Roman clergy direct their letters to Cyprian, “ To Pope Cyprian,” or “ to the most blessed and most glorious Pope Cyprian.”

* I give the entire passage as it stands in the last Popish edition by Baluze, which undoubtedly contains some interpolations of latter ages, but still is unserviceable to the cause of Popery. See *Cyprian. de Unitate Ecclesiæ, editus cum annotationibus Jer. Stephani, S. T. B.* Lond. 1632. These interpolations were omitted by Baluze himself, but inserted by his editor.

† This declaration is so clear, that the Papists have used every art in order to evade it. *Nullum non artificium est non adhibitum, si non elevando, certe obscurando*, says Chamier, who has with great patience, shewn the weakness of their objections. See his most learned work against Popery, entitled *Panstratia Catholica*, in four vols. folio. Vol II. p. 471.

‡ “ From unity ” *i. e.* from *one* not from *several*, by which the unity of the church is signified. So Augustine, “ Peter the first

primacy is given to Peter, to *shew* that the Church of Christ is one, and the chair one (*i. e.* the apostolic office and power.) They are all pastors, and but one flock is shewn, which is fed by all the apostles with joint consent." The apostles, then, were equal to Peter in honour and power; this dignity, he says, ought to be kept in particular "by us Bishops, who *preside* in the church, that we may prove the Episcopacy one and undivided," all equally we see. This is the plain design of this passage (which has been so much abused by the Romanists,) viz. that Christ named Peter first, or rather instead of all the apostles, to *recommend* that unity he intended to have in his church; and to *instruct* them, that though they were many, yet their office and power was but one, which they were to exercise as one man "with one consent."

And therefore when Cyprian says, that "Christ built his church upon Peter alone," he does not and cannot mean the *person* of Peter, but that *apostolic office and power*, which was given to the apostles in the name of Peter, as the church is said to be "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets," and as he says himself (in *27th Epist.* where he is explaining *Tu es Petrus, &c.*) that the church is not "built" upon one Bishop, but "upon Bishops, and that every act of the church is governed by the same Bishops *."

of the apostles in order, one or singly, answered for many (*unitas in multis*), unity among many," (*Serm. 13.*)—And Isidore, (*Ep. 10.*) "Nothing is so pleasing to God as *love*; our Saviour making this *manifest* from the *beginning*, that he wished all his disciples should be united as brethren." Where we see, *προοιμια* and *το ινδεξαοδα* are used in the same sense as *exordium* and *manifestare* in Cyprian.

* Inde per temporum et successionum vices, Episcoporum ordi-

After enforcing the preservation of unity from the *one Episcopate*, Cyprian returns to *the church*. "The church (says he,) is one, which is extended widely into a multitude by the increase of fruitfulness,—as there are many rays, but one light, and many branches, but one stem founded on a tenacious root,—so the church expands forth her rays through the whole world. Yet the light is but one, which is everywhere diffused, nor is the unity of the body separated. It extends its branches over all the earth, &c. yet the head is but one, and the origin one, the mother one, abounding in fruitfulness." Here we are told by the advocates of Popery, that by the *origin* and *root* of the church is meant *Peter*, and from thence it is inferred, that "Cyprian is here extolling Peter's primacy, as the necessary centre of unity," (De la Hogue *De Ecclesiâ*, p. 355.) In answer to such inference, it will be sufficient to return the answer of Bishop Andrews: Cyprian, says he, does not make Peter the fountain of the church, but the church herself the fountain from whence spring many rivulets, and the light from whence many rays, and the root from whence many branches are propagated. We learn from Cyprian himself, that "the church spreads forth her rays through the world." The church, he says, not Peter. "Yet there is one light everywhere diffused (is this light Peter too? or is he everywhere diffused?) nor is the unity of the body separated. There is one origin and one mother," &c. Surely you will not call Peter mother, nor head neither. For it follows in Cyprian, "She produces us, we are fed

natio, et Ecclesiæ ratio decurrit, ut Ecclesia super Episcopos constitutatur: et omnis actus Ecclesiæ per eosdem Præpositos gubernetur. *Ep.* 27.

by her milk, and animated by her spirit." These words cannot be said of Peter, but of the church, and in this sense they are used by Augustin, (Lib. II. *Contr. Crescon.* c. 35. 36. and Lib. III. *contr. eund.* c. 58. 65.) And therefore Pamelius, although he has scraped together every thing from Cyprian for the purpose of establishing the Pope's supremacy, has passed this over in perfect silence.

Such is the plain meaning of this passage, which has been brought forward to prove that the root, origin, mother, and centre of unity of the church was placed in the person of Peter (although Peter's name is not mentioned,) and then it is *presumed* that the Bishop of Rome succeeds in the office of being the root, origin, mother, and centre of the Catholic Church! Even granting all this, from whence is the *jurisdiction* and *authority* of Peter to be deduced? Where is it mentioned? In order to bestow some share of *power* on the Bishops of Rome, Dr De la Hogue, after many useless distinctions, asserts, that "to preserve the unity of the Episcopate, *there is required* some eminent authority in one over the other Bishops." But where do Cyprian or the apostles require any eminent authority of Peter over the rest, or where does it appear to be necessary in their opinion? No where, as I have already abundantly proved from Cyprian's expressions.

Let us now attend to a few of his *transactions* with the Roman Bishop, and see whether Cyprian acknowledged that *primacy* of *honour* and *jurisdiction*, which the Bishop of Rome claims *over the universal church* by *divine right*,—or whether he acknowledged his right of *making and directing decrees to all churches*, and that he was *the centre of unity*, so that in all cases it was necessary to adhere to him; for these privileges

belong to the See of Rome by divine right, according to Dr De la Hogue. But observe, we ought not to be surprised at the intimate correspondence between Cyprian and the Bishops of Rome, or suspect that it arose from any absolutely *necessary* alliance between them. This intercourse was observed among all Bishops in the church, and continued as long as they retained the same faith, but was necessarily suspended when any of them became an heretic or schismatic. —And we have the greatest reason to affirm, that if Cyprian had lived in our days, he would have held any intercourse with the Bishop of Rome, or any other Popish Bishop, in the utmost abhorrence.

To proceed.—The schismatical party at Carthage, having set up Fortunatus as a Bishop in opposition to Cyprian, sent some of their partisans to various churches, in order to justify their proceedings. They apply *first* to the African Bishops, but receiving no encouragement there; they went to Cornelius Bishop of Rome; who, though at first unwilling, was finally *compelled* by them to receive their letters. Upon which Cyprian writes to Cornelius, and exhorts him “not to be moved them by their threats,” and that it is inconsistent with the power of a christian Bishop to fear “the *insidious* dealings of impious men;” at the same time, to encourage him, putting him in mind of the commendations given by St Paul of the Romans, and that such traitors and perfidious men could get no support from them, “*ad quos perfidia non potest habere accessum.*” He then tells him, that if the threats of such persons should relax the church’s discipline, all the power of it would soon be taken away, and that “the ground of all schism arises from disobedience to the Bishop;” not the

Bishop of Rome, as Bellarmin pretends, but every Bishop, for it was not Cornelius, but Cyprian that was disobeyed. He then acquaints Cornelius, that the cause had been already judged in Africa, and therefore he had no right to interfere in it. "For (says he,) since it is decreed by us all, and it is both reasonable and just, that every one's cause should be heard where the crime was committed; and since there is a portion of the flock committed to every Bishop which he is to govern, as he shall be accountable (not to the Bishop of Rome, but) to the Lord *, our subjects ought not to run about from Bishop to Bishop, nor break the harmonious concord of Bishops by their deceitful and fallacious temerity, but to plead their cause there where they may have accusers and witnesses of their crimes;" i. e. that it belongs not to Cornelius, nor any other Bishop, to take cognizance of a cause already judged by Cyprian; for, as he proceeds, "the *authority* of the Church in Africa is not *less* than that of the Church in Rome †." Therefore, according to Cyprian, 1st, Every Bishop was judge of his own people. 2d, That no Bishop, not even the Bishop of Rome, was superior to another Bishop, nor could receive appeals from his sentence. 3d, That this independency of Bishops was founded on each having his portion of the flock assigned to him, for the government of which he was to be answerable to God alone.

In this epistle, Cyprian charges his schismatical Presbyters, that having set up a Bishop in opposition

* Quam regat unusquisque et gubernet, ratione sui actûs Domino redditurus. *Ep.* 55.

† Nisi paucis desperatis et perditis *minor* videtur esse auctoritas episcoporum in Africa. *Ib.*

to himself, "they had dared to sail to the chair of Peter, and the principal church, from whence priestly unity sprung;" and from hence our adversaries infer that Cyprian (notwithstanding his strong assertions in defence of his own independency,) acknowledged that the See of Rome was the centre of unity. But the unreasonableness of such an inference will soon appear, on examining into the circumstances of the case. At this time Cornelius was the lawful Bishop of Rome, in opposition to whom a schismatical party had set up one Novatian. Consequently Cornelius being the Catholic Bishop, held the chair of Peter, and unity sprung from him, and not from Novatian who had been the cause of schism, and therefore the true root of unity was with Cornelius, and not with the schismatical Novatian. The term "principal church," is applied to the Church at Rome, because (as Rigaltius remarks,) "it was constituted in the principal city of the world," and quotes the 22d Canon of Chalcedon to confirm it.—This explanation will serve also as an answer to the passage in *Epist.* 55. where Cyprian orders those who sail to Rome "to hold to the root and matrix of the Catholic Church;" *i. e.* to the Catholic Bishop, and not to the schismatical one.—But you are so very unreasonable (says the learned Stillingfleet,) that though no more be said of Rome, than might be said of any other apostolic church, yet because it is said of the Church of Rome, it must import some vast authority, which, if it had been said of any other, would have been interpreted by yourselves into nothing; for because it is said that they who joined with Cornelius preserved the unity of the Catholic Church, therefore it must needs be understood, that the Roman Church is the root of the Catholic. But

he must have a very mean understanding that can be swayed by such trifles as these. For was there not a catholic and schismatic party at Rome? And if they who joined with Novatian, separated from the Catholic Church, then they who were in communion with Cornelius must preserve the unity of it. And would not this argument as well prove the catholic party at Carthage to be the *root* and *matrix* of the Catholic Church, as at Rome?

Besides this (in his 73d epistle,) Cyprian speaks in his own person with other Catholic Bishops (*nos qui ecclesie unius caput et radicem tenemus,*) "we who hold the *head* and *root* of one church," by which it appears that he could not make the Church of *Rome* the root and matrix of the *Catholic* Church, this being understood of the *unity* and *society* of the Catholic Church, without relation to the Church of Rome; and in the schism at Rome about Cornelius and Novatian, Cyprian sent two of his colleagues thither, "to endeavour to bring the members of that divided body of the Church of *Rome*, to the unity of the *Catholic* Church," which is certainly a very different thing from the *Catholic* Church deriving its unity from the particular Church of *ROME* *. For no particular church can be the root

* The Church at Rome was, in the early ages, particularly infested by heretics and schismatics. Goulart therefore justly inquires: "If the Roman Bishop was so extremely negligent in preserving order among the few churches of one city, how could he be expected to manage the innumerable multitude of the whole Catholic Church? Christ had other methods for ruling his church, than to commit the care of his whole sheepfold to one, and that one generally the most inattentive of all." And Cyprian says, that therefore there were many Bishops in the church, that if one attempted to introduce heresy, the rest might lend their assistance. *The rest, not one.* *Notæ in Cyprian.* p. 200.

of the catholic, and if any, Jerusalem had better pretensions to it than Rome ; and Cyprian and his brethren dared not have suspended their communion at all (as Baronius confesses they did,) if they had esteemed the Church at Rome the *root* of the Catholic Church, All this serves to confirm that, by this expression, was not meant any authority or privilege of the Church at Rome over other apostolic churches, which, in respect of the lesser churches derived from them, are called *Matrices Ecclesiæ* by Tertullian and others *.

To proceed to another instance of the independency of Bishops in Cyprian's age : About the year 255, the Bishops of Africa and the East came to a determination to rebaptise all heretics on their admission into the church. In order the better to maintain that mutual love and concern which Bishops owed to one another, the African Bishops informed Stephen Bishop of Rome of their constitutions by a synodical letter, in which they say that, "for their *common honour*, and the simplicity of their love, they sent them to him, hoping that he would approve of that which is right, —that, although they are conscious that some could not readily alter their opinion, yet, preserving the bond of peace with their colleagues, will retain what they have once conceived, therefore, they did not force or give law to any, since *every Bishop* had, in

* How would the advocates of Popery have exulted, if the following expressions had been applied to Rome ? "Cæsarea (says Nazianzen,) is the mother (mater,) of almost all churches ; and the whole christian republic embraces and regards it, as the circle its centre," *Epist. ad Cæs.* "Think of the magnitude of the city (says Chrysostom, speaking of Antioch, *Hom. 3. ad pop.*) that we speak not now of one, or of two, or of ten souls, but of thousands without end, of the head of the whole world, *de totius orbis capite.*"

the administration of his church, *the free power of his will*, being to render to the Lord an account of his actions." When Stephen was informed of this determination, he behaved with the most unchristian arrogance and violence, prohibited all the christians of his church from affording the African deputies lodging or entertainment, excluded Firmilian and other Bishops of Cappadocia, Cilicia, and Galatia, from the communion of the Church of Rome, and pronounced Cyprian in particular "a false Christ and false apostle." But did not Cyprian yield to Stephen's declaration on this subject, and acknowledge him the governor of the universal church?—No. On the contrary he wrote a full confutation of his decree, and affirmed that he had "*espoused the cause of heretics, against the Church of God;*" and the Bishops who agree with him, pronounce Stephen "*cut off from the unity of the church.*" The words of Firmilian Bishop of Cæsarea, are: How many strifes and dissensions have you (Stephen,) caused through all the churches?—What a great sin you have heaped on yourself, by *cutting yourself from* so many flocks? For you have cut yourself off: be not deceived. Since he is truly a *schismatic*, who has apostatized from the communion of ecclesiastical unity; for while you think that all are excluded from you, you have only *excluded yourself* from all *."

* "*Pecatum vero quam magnum tibi exaggerasti, quando te & tot gregibus scidisti? Excidisti enim teipsum; noli te fallere. Si quidem ille est vere schismaticus, qui se a communione ecclesiasticæ unitatis apostatam fecerit. Dum enim putas omnes a te abstineri posse, solum te ab omnibus abstinuisti.*" The Popish editors are all somewhat troubled at these strong expressions of Firmilian, and the last saves the credit of his cause, by saying that "the father

Now I desire to know, whether these Bishops believed the Roman Bishop to be the centre of communion in the Catholic Church?—It is plain they made him the cause of *schism*, instead of the cause of *unity*, and never thought themselves excluded from the Catholic Church, by being excluded from the Roman communion; and so far were they from receiving his decrees on the subject of baptism (which were esteemed so very necessary in Cornelius's opinion,) that they pronounced them HERETICAL. This was that St Cyprian (says Bishop Morton,) who uttered that excellent saying: No man hath God for his father, who hath not the church for his mother; little doubting but a man might have the church for his mother, who stood in opposition to the Church of Rome, and far from thinking that separation from her communion was a certain mark either of schism or heresy. Moreover, Cyprian to his last day held his former opinion*; and St Austin, (though disputing with the Donatists, uses a kind of laudable tergiversation in this point, says Baronius,) confesses elsewhere, that it is not found that Cyprian ever changed his opinion. If then

was perhaps hurried by the messenger whom Cyprian sent to him, so that he could not read his letter over again," *Vit. Cyp.* p. 117. A most notable conjecture indeed! and that will do equally well for all epistles as well as this, says *Mr Le Mesurier, Bampton Lect.* p. 171.

* Even granting that Cyprian and Firmilian changed their opinion with respect to the baptism of heretics, yet it must not be inferred that it was done in compliance with Cornelius's opinion, or that they thenceforth acknowledged his supremacy. The very circumstance of their opposition to Stephen, and their declaring him cut off from the unity of the church, sufficiently proves that they were totally unacquainted with the modern notion of his being the centre of unity.

Cyprian being excommunicated by the Pope, was notwithstanding still esteemed a Catholic, and has ever since been registered for a saint; then doubtless the Reformed are much more secure who are excommunicated for opposing not only the gross idolatry, but also as many heresies of the Church of Rome, as she hath new articles of faith, among which this, viz. "The Catholic Roman Church, without union to which there is no salvation," must not be held the least.

EUSEBIUS Bishop of Cæsarea has written a History of the Church, from the birth of Christ to the year 325. Yet this industrious compiler * of all passages relating to the original constitution of the church, and all ecclesiastical transactions, never once mentions the Bishops of Rome as possessing any authority over the Catholic Church, or as being its centre of unity. This principle we never find urged against the schisms and heresies which broke out in the very city of Rome; particularly the Novatian schism, which began in Rome itself and lasted 200 years. Blastus and Florinus raised a great schism in Rome, who (says Eusebius,) drew away many from that church, and enticed them to embrace their opinions; these heresies were quelled, not by the Pope's authority, but by the arguments of Irenæus Bishop of Lyons. And in the same age,

* Eusebius's History abounds in quotations from more than twenty three writers of the three first centuries, yet there is no mention in any one of them, of any superior authority belonging to the Bishop of Rome. Nor is there the least intimation of it in the following writers who lived within the same time, whose works remain to this day: Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Tatian, Theophilus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Tertullian's Apol. &c. Minutius Felix, Origen, Arnobius, Lactantius, &c. &c. Indeed these are always passed over in silence by Roman writers.

while Victor was Bishop of Rome, a pestilent heresy was raised in that city by a tanner and a banker, who set up a Bishop, and settled a maintenance on him. Surely the modern Romanists ought no longer to upbraid *our church* with the preaching of mechanics and tradesmen!

There is a remarkable instance in Eusebius, (Lib. VII. 27. A. D. 265.) which clearly proves in what manner the unity of the church was preserved. It is concerning the deposition of Paulus Samosatenus Archbishop of Antioch, wherein it is to be observed that the Bishops, assembled to examine the cause of Paulus, did not meet by any authority or summons from the Bishop of Rome, but as pastors of the same common flock, to take care that the faith should receive no injury. In the next place, when they had judged him guilty of heresy, they did not wait for confirmation of their proceedings, or orders from the Bishop of Rome how to proceed, but immediately pronounced, by their own authority, sentence of excommunication and deprivation against him, and presently created Domnus Bishop of Antioch in his place. When they had done this, they sent a synodical epistle to the chief Bishops in the world, giving an account of their proceedings, that as far as possible every thing might be done with the full consent and approbation of the whole Episcopal College. This epistle they directed "to Dionysius Bishop of Rome, Maximus Bishop of Alexandria, and all our *fellow-bishops* throughout the world, and to the whole Catholic Church under heaven." They also say, "we cited to Antioch many other distant Bishops, as the Bishop of Alexandria, Bishop of Cæsarea," &c. Now it is certain, that these Bishops bordering upon An-

tioch pretended to no jurisdiction over the Bishop of Alexandria, &c. so that this was no summons of authority, but of brotherly concern for the faith and universal flock of Christ. Hence we may compute the force of that argument brought for the supremacy of the Roman Bishop, in his convening many Bishops upon a like occasion. And this synodical epistle gives the Bishop of Rome no other title than other Bishops, calling them their "fellow-bishops." No authority in the Bishop of Rome more than others, is so much as hinted at in this epistle, which is inconceivable, if they entertained that notion of his supremacy which has since prevailed, and which ought to have been exerted in such a case, as the deprivation of the third Bishop in the christian world. These Antiochian Bishops give him notice, as well as other Bishops, to direct no longer their communicatory letters to Paulus, whom they had deposed, but to Domnus, whom they had elected in his place.—Leslie's *Preface* to Parker's *Abridgment of Eusebius*, Lond. 1720.

Here was the unity and security of the Catholic Church in those ages. It consisted in the mutual correspondence and good agreement of the Bishops, the heads of the several churches.

Thus I have examined all the arguments that have been lately produced to prove the universal jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome in the first 300 years*,

* In my former edition (to which I refer the reader,) I carried the examination of the opinion of the ancient writers down to the beginning of the fifth century, but have omitted it in this, partly for the sake of uniformity, and partly for the introduction of more important matter. The fathers of the three first ages are, in the opinion of our best divines, perfectly sufficient to shew the opinion

and the *absolute* necessity of adhering to his communion, and I think, have clearly shewn that such notions were then totally unknown to the primitive christians. This indeed has been candidly acknowledged by several learned Romanists ; but I shall content myself with the following confession of Mr Bower, who had been once a Jesuit, but died in the reformed communion. Speaking of his *Lives of the Popes*, he says, " This work I undertook some years since at Rome, and brought it down to the close of the second century. As I was then a most zealous champion for the Pope's supremacy, my chief design was to ascertain that supremacy, by shewing, that from the apostles' time to the present it had been acknowledged by the Catholic Church. But, alas ! I soon perceived that I had undertaken more than it was in my power to perform. Nay, while in order to maintain this cause, I examined with particular attention the writings of the apostles, and of the many pious and learned men who had flourished in the three first centuries : I was so far from finding any thing that seemed the least to countenance such a doctrine, that, on the contrary, it appeared evident beyond dispute,

of antiquity on any controverted point ; for soon after Constantine's accession to the throne, the doctrines and practices of christianity became visibly corrupted. " I do not intend to go lower than the Fathers of the three or four first centuries (says that eminent antiquary Dr Cave,) for the life and spirit of christianity did then visibly decline apace," (*Primitive Christianity*, Pref.—*Dr Brett's Div. Right of Episc.* p. 1. 13.) Speaking of Constantine's civil establishment of christianity, the late Bishop Newton remarks : Though it added much to the temporal prosperity, yet it contributed little to the spiritual graces and virtues of christians. It enlarged their revenues, but proved the fatal *means* of corrupting the doctrine and relaxing the discipline of the church. *On Proph.* II. p. 164.

that, during the above-mentioned time, it had been utterly unknown to the christian world. In spite then of my endeavours to the contrary, I began to look upon the Pope's supremacy, not only as a prerogative quite chimerical, but as the most impudent attempt that had ever been made. I say, in spite of my endeavours to the contrary, for I was very unwilling to give up a point, upon which I had been taught by Bellarmin that the whole of christianity depended. But great is the power of truth, and at last it prevailed. I became a proselyte to the opinion which I had proposed to confute, and sincerely abjured in my mind that which I had undertaken to defend."

Pref.

Before I conclude this chapter, I shall briefly point out at what time the unity of the church, as maintained in the first 300 years, began first to be changed; and by what means so groundless a pretence, as that of the Bishop of Rome's universal supremacy, gained belief and submission from so considerable a part of Christendom *. Although the equality and independ-

* See *The Grand Forgery Displayed; Essay on the Roman Pontificate, Heathen and Papal; Dissertation on the Papal Supremacy, chiefly with relation to the Spanish Church*, among the *Tracts* of the learned Dr M. Geddes. Dr Cave and Bishop Parker's *Discourses on Church Government. Answer to Hawarden's True Church* by F. H. Lond. 1716. On the subject of the Roman Bishop's Presidency, &c. in General Councils, see *Richerii Hist. Conc. Gen.* Cologn. 1683, in which the arguments of Bellarmin, Binius, and Du Val are particularly confuted; and *Richardson's Prælections*, Lond. 1726. On Appeals, see *Field On the Church*, p. 561. *Barrow's Works*, l. p. 711. *Merton's Grand Imposture*, p. 262. *Richerii Hist. Conc. Vol. I.*—Richer judiciously remarks, *Magnum esse positum discrimen inter appellationes atque perfugia clericorum. Bellarminus perfugium pro appellatione usurpat, et vocis æquivocatione lectorem frustratur.*

ency of Bishops was firmly believed and maintained in the first three centuries, yet it was found expedient for the farther maintenance of unity, that the Bishops of the same province should unite into one body, and govern their churches by mutual consent, all under the inspection of one of themselves, whom they invested with a power of presiding in provincial synods, consecrating the Bishops of the province, and several other privileges determined and limited by ecclesiastical canons. This moderator or president of the Bishops of a province, was styled Archbishop or Metropolitan, and is still retained as an useful constitution by the modern Episcopal Churches.

It farther appears, that the office of Metropolitan was generally conferred on that Bishop, who presided over the church established in the metropolis, and it is a matter beyond all dispute, that the Bishops of Rome, Antioch, and Alexandria, as residing in the three most considerable cities, had a pre-eminence above all others, and were distinguished by peculiar rights and privileges. First, in this human order of affairs, stood the Bishop of Rome, because residing in the imperial city, the place of general resort; and it was principally owing to this circumstance that he was enabled to establish his superiority over the greater part of Christendom. "Rome (says St Cyprian, *Ep.* 42.) ought to have the precedency of Carthage, on account of its magnitude." "To the See of ancient Rome (says the Council of Chalcedon, A.D. 451.) because that was the *royal city*, the fathers justly gave the privileges." The fountain of Papal eminence was, in their judgment, not any divine institution, not the authority of St Peter deriving itself to his successors, but the concession of the fathers, who were

moved to grant it, because Rome was *the imperial city*. To the same purpose, the Empress Placidia in her epistle to Theodosius, in behalf of Leo Bishop of Rome, says "It becometh us to preserve to this city (which is mistress of all countries,) a reverence in all things."

In consequence of these advantages, the Bishop of Rome had, in the time of the severest persecutions, a numerous and opulent clergy; or, as Cornelius expresses himself in a letter to Fabius, "a rich and plentiful clergy, with a great and innumerable people in his own diocese." Ammianus Marcellinus, a Pagan historian, informs us "their feasts exceeded the tables of kings," (*Lib. 27.*) and contrasts the poverty and humility of the country-bishops, with the pride and pomp of the Bishop of Rome. On account of their large incomes, they were extremely charitable, and were accustomed to transmit very liberal contributions to foreign churches, to relieve the necessities of the brethren that were condemned to the mines, as we are informed by Dionysius Bishop of Corinth, in his Letter to Soter of Rome, A. D. 174. Hence they necessarily obtained great respect and veneration. Hence in all common affairs, the privilege of presidency naturally devolved on them without competition. The circumstance too, of their church being founded by Peter and Paul, contributed to give it a great reputation; the christian world bearing an extraordinary reverence to those great names, and which the Bishops of that See knew well how to improve and turn to their own advantage. For this reason, Cyprian styled the Roman See "the Chair of St Peter," and Firmilian, who had the firmness to pronounce Stephen a schismatic, declares that he is

“justly indignant at such open and manifest folly of Stephen, who boasts in such a manner of the place of his Bishopric, and contends that he holds the succession of Peter.”

It is natural, as Dr Barrow observes, and can hardly be otherwise, but that the Bishop of a chief city, finding himself to exceed in wealth, in power, in advantages of friendships, dependencies, &c. should not affect to raise himself above the level : it is an ambition that will seize on the most moderate, and otherwise religious minds.—No wonder then, that after the Bishop of Rome had arrived to some pitch of authority over poor christians, especially those that lay nearest him, he improved his eminency into power and his pastoral charge into a kind of empire; according to that observation of Socrates, that “long before his time, the Roman Episcopacy had advanced itself beyond the priesthood into a dynasty,” (*Lib. VII. 7.*) And the same he observes to have happened on similar grounds in the See of Alexandria.

After the Roman Emperors became christians, in the fourth century, the Bishops of Rome enjoyed much better advantages of carrying on their designs. For then, by the influence of the Emperor Constantine, new degrees of eminence were (most unhappily for christianity,) introduced among the Bishops of the Roman empire. Patriarchs, as I mentioned before (p. 162,) were placed over the Archbishops of the several provinces. Of these, the most considerable at first were the Bishops of Rome, Antioch, and Alexandria, to whom the Bishop of Constantinople was afterwards added, when the imperial residence was transferred to that city.

In consequence of the riches heaped on the church

by the emperors, the Bishops of Rome surpassed all their brethren in magnificence and splendour, in their sumptuous manner of living, and in the richness of their revenues and possessions. Hence the elevation to that See became a principal object of sacerdotal ambition, and occasioned contests and tumults as dreadful to the public peace, as contrary to every idea of christian charity and humility. By the assistance of the court, they were capable of sending out missionaries to various parts of the West; and on this foundation they built and advanced a claim to superiority and dominion. Their power was much amplified by the importunity of persons condemned or expelled from their places, whether justly or unjustly: And thus Cyprian's schismatical Presbyters, whom he calls "*pauci, desperati, perdit*," being condemned in Africa, fled to Rome for shelter, which (says Bishop Stillingfleet,) was apt to take advantage from such renegadoes as these were, by degrees to get more power into her hands, and lift up her head above her fellow-churches. —Moreover, pride appears to have been a vice more peculiar to Rome than other places. It was this excited the old Romans to subdue the world,—by this the emperors tyrannised over it for some ages,—and when Rome changed its lords, it did not change its task-masters. The ambition which the emperors laid down, the Bishops of the city took up, and prosecuted it by worse methods than ever the ancient Romans did. St Basil more than once complains of the arrogance of the West, and expresses a passionate resentment, that "he hated the pride of that church."

Furnished with these and many other advantages (says Dr Cave,) they set up for themselves, and gave

not over, till they had spread such an ecclesiastical empire over the world (*i. e.* the Roman empire,) as would admit neither superior nor equal.

Is it not plain (observes Dr Geddes *,) that the Bishops of Rome, after they were in possession of that primacy bestowed on them as Bishops of the imperial city, were still stretching it, though for many years, but to little purpose? So, in the fifth century, they attempted to obtrude on the African churches a decree of allowing appeals from them to the Roman See, as if it had been made at the Council of Nice. But the African Bishops, to the number of 270, and St AUSTIN at their head, surprised at this new pretence, sent into Greece for authentic copies of the Nicene Canons; which, having examined, they sent letters to the Bishop of Rome, informing him, "that the Council of Nice had decreed, that all causes should be determined in the places where they arose; and that it was unreasonable to think that God should enable a single person (at Rome) to examine the justice of a cause, and deny his grace to a multitude of Bishops assembled in synod," &c. From hence (as Dr Cave argues,) it follows, 1st, That whatever power the Bishop of Rome claimed in Africa was founded on the canons, and not as successor of St Peter. 2d, The canons give the Bishop of Rome no power over foreign churches, either to hear or decide causes, or to send legates with authority, "for this, say the African Bishops, we do not find commanded by any synod of the fathers." 3d, That the Church of Africa, and accordingly every national church, has an inherent power of determining all causes that arise within it.

* Tracts, Vol. II. p. 4. 1714.

self. 4th, That appeals which they call *improba refugia*, were not allowed even to Rome ; and they inform the Bishop of Rome, that his proceedings were so far from the humility and simplicity of the gospel, that they tended only to nourish “ swelling pride and secular ambition in the church.” Their epistle to the Bishop of Rome (says Bishop Stillingfleet,) is a noble monument of the prudence, courage, and simplicity of the African Bishops,—enough to put any reasonable man out of the fond conceit of an universal pastorship of the Bishop of Rome. I wonder not that Cardinal Baronius says, there are some hard things in this epistle, that Cardinal Perron sweats and toils so much to so little purpose to enervate the force of it ; for, as long as the records of it last, we have an impregnable bulwark against the usurpations of the Church of Rome.—Stillingfleet’s *Works*, IV. p. 394 *.

Thus, by degrees the Bishops of Rome rose to that height they have now obtained, and not content with usurping over their fellow-churchmen, their next attempt was upon princes ; for being now esteemed

* In order to supply the defect of evidence in the first three ages, for the authority of the Roman Bishop, the Decretal Epistles were impudently forged in the eighth or ninth century ; and also the donation of Constantine, wherein he gave away the Roman empire and all its rights to the Pope. These false decretals, which exalt the power of the Bishops of Rome during the first three ages to heaven itself, “ were universally believed (says Abbe Fleury,) to be the doctrine of purest antiquity from the eighth to the sixteenth century. They made an incurable wound in the discipline of the church, by the maxims they introduced concerning the judgments of Bishops and the Pope’s authority.” *Discourses on Ecclesiast. Hist.* p. 119. They were believed in the Council of Trent, but are now everywhere rejected as spurious. *Febron. de Statu Ecclesiae*, p. 531.

Christ's Vicars on earth, with other blasphemous titles as Vice-God, yea and even Lord God, they thought their power was limited as long as kings and emperors were even in temporals, subject to them. And therefore, in the days of Gregory VII. (A. D. 1086.) they pretended to a power of deposing princes, disposing of their dominions to others, and dispensing with the oaths of allegiance, which their subjects had sworn to them. This exorbitant power has been challenged by them for many successive ages; and, when opportunity served, has been frequently put in practice.

And it was easy for them (observes Bishop Burnet,) to make crowns change their masters as they pleased, for there were always other ambitious princes ready, for their own ends, to invade the dominions of those deposed kings upon the Pope's warrant, and the generality of the people were so possessed with the Pope's power of releasing souls from purgatory, and from the punishment due to sin, that they were easily prevailed on to follow his thunders. And by that time, the Pope had swarms of emissaries of the Begging Orders, who, under shew of austere piety, gained much reverence and esteem in the world, and so got all subjected to the papal tyranny.

Thus did the empire of that usurping Bishop become, throughout the greatest part of Europe, triumphant, till at length the impudence with which their abominations were practised, and the length to which they were carried, shocked the common sense of mankind, and providence was pleased to raise up a succession of men, by whose exertions many kingdoms were rescued from the bondage in which they were held.

CHAP. IV.

A GENERAL DEFENCE OF THE REFORMATION OF THE
EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN ENGLAND, IRELAND, AND
SCOTLAND.

FROM the foregoing examination of the scriptures and primitive fathers, we may with the greatest truth and justice make the following inferences, with respect to the government of the Catholic Church :

1st, That it consisted, in the apostolic and primitive ages, of all *faithful* churches under their respective Bishops, who, by divine right, were accountable to Christ alone for their administration. 2d, The churches were preserved in unity, not by necessary subjection to one visible head, but by their agreement in the essentials of the *apostolic* faith and worship, and the correspondence and intercourse of their Bishops. 3d, That as long as a church preserved the essentials of faith and worship, it remained in catholic unity, even although it differed from others in rites and ceremonies (for uniformity in these was not required,) but when it corrupted the faith and worship, it was excluded from catholic unity. 4th, That the church (or diocese,) of Rome, with its Bishop, was considered merely as a particular church, possessing, by divine right, no prerogatives above others, but liable to be expelled from catholic unity when it corrupted the pure faith or worship.

From these premises it clearly follows, that (since the Bishop of Rome possessed no supremacy by divine

right over other churches,) the Reformed Bishops and people would have been perfectly justifiable in shaking off the intolerable oppression of his jurisdiction, even although no differences had existed between the parties, with respect to faith and worship. But they had more serious reasons for seceding from his communion, and asserting their apostolic independency, than the burthen of a foreign usurpation. They could have remained no longer united with him, without partaking in those scandalous corruptions of faith and worship, which, for several hundred years, had defiled the greatest part of Europe, and which had been imposed on them as necessary to salvation, by the overbearing power of this Italian usurper.

Accordingly, the first step towards the restoration of their just rights, was the renunciation of the Bishop of Rome's usurpation by the Bishops in England, who determined in convocation, A. D. 1553, (even before they had renounced the corrupt doctrines of Popery,) "that it was many hundred years before the Bishop of Rome could acquire any power of a primate over any other Bishops, which were not within his province of Italy; and that the Bishops of Rome do now transgress their own profession made at their creation, for they solemnly vow that they shall inviolably preserve all the ordinances made in the eight first general councils, among which it is especially provided, that all causes shall be determined within the province where they began, and that by the Bishops of the same province, which absolutely excludes all papal, *i.e.* foreign power out of these realms." They proceeded next, upon mature deliberation, to reform (as far as their influence extended,) those other corruptions that had crept into the church. With respect to FAITH,

they renounced the groundless traditions of the Romish Church, and declared the inspired scriptures to be the sole rule of faith, and that we are "accounted righteous only for the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, and not for our own works or deservings."—As for WORSHIP, they directed that it was to be offered to God only, and not to the Virgin Mary, to saints and angels; and that worshipping and bowing down to images was idolatrous and sinful. They abolished transubstantiation, the sacrifice of the mass, and the adoration of the consecrated bread and wine, restored to the laity the cup in the eucharist, and directed that the public worship of God should no longer be performed in an unknown tongue, but in that with which their flocks were best acquainted. Moreover, they restored to the laity the use of the scriptures in their native language, in order that they should not take on trust whatsoever was declared to them by their pastors, but, like the noble Bereans, "*examine whether these things be so.*"

But let us now examine, 1st, by what authority our Bishops, inferior clergy, and laity, introduced these alterations; and, 2d, whether in adopting them, they cut themselves off from the Catholic Church.

I. *By what authority* our Bishops, clergy, and laity introduced these alterations, for our adversaries inform us that "it was never lawful for any nation to reform the belief of the Catholic Church," (Hawarden's *True Church*, &c. Part I. c. 1.)—*Answer.* They never attempted to *reform* the *belief* of the Catholic Church (that would be impossible,) but to *restore* it to themselves and their flocks. They certainly reformed the corrupt belief of the Romish Church in which they had been educated, but the Romish Church was not then

the Catholic Church. And this the clergy had full authority to do, by the law of God. For being "*overseers*" and "*ministers*" of religion, and having the charge of souls committed to them, and "*the glorious gospel committed to their trust*," (1 Tim. i. 11.—1 Thess. ii. 4.) they were bound to "*hold it fast*," and "*in the form of sound words, wherein it was delivered*," (2 Tim. i. 13.) they were bound as "*ambassadors of Christ*," (2 Cor. v. 20.) to "*approve themselves as the ministers of God by the word of truth*," (2 Cor. vi. 4. 7.) to "*testify the gospel of the grace of God*," and to "*fulfil the ministry of the word*;" as watchmen "*to watch for their souls, as they that must give an account thereof*," (Heb. xiii. 17.) and "*to feed the flock, over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers*," "*to labour in*" administering "*the word and doctrine*," and "*the faith once delivered to the saints*," (1 Tim. v. 17.—Jude 3.) and "*by sound doctrine to stop the mouths of vain talkers and deceivers, who, for filthy lucre's sake, teach things which they ought not, and to convince gainsayers*," (Tit. i. 9. 10. 11.) If then the Bishops and pastors of the church found it corrupted by unsound doctrines or idolatrous worship, they were, by the law of God and the charge of souls for which they were accountable, and (as Cyprian says,) "*accountable to God alone, and not to be judged by another*," obliged to reject these corruptions, and "*take heed to their flocks, when the speakers of perverse things arose to draw away disciples after them*," (Acts xx. 28. 29. 30.)

Moreover, not only the clergy are authorised by the law of God to reform a corrupt church, and restore the Catholic faith and worship, but the laity are obliged by the same law to forsake their communion, in case of their refusing to promote a reformation, or

when it has appeared that they have introduced notorious corruptions*. For the holy scriptures expressly call such as corrupt Christ's religion, "*deceivers, seducers, wolves, makers of divisions, false prophets and false teachers.*" The duty of the people to adhere to them, is no longer than while they continue to be "*followers of Christ.*" If they "*cause divisions contrary to the doctrine which we have learned,*" the people are commanded to "*avoid them,*" (Rom. xvi. 17.) Although they appear "*in sheep's clothing,*" they are ordered to "*beware*" of them, and to flee from them as "*wolves,*" nay although they were "*apostles or angels from heaven,*" yet if "*they preach any other gospel than that which we (the apostles) have preached,*" they are to "*be accursed,*" Gal. i. 8 †.

The fellowship of Bishops with the apostles, and our obligations to maintain fellowship with them, is connected with their adhering to the apostolic declaration of "*what they had heard or seen,*" (1 John i. 3.) and to continue stedfastly in the "*doctrine and fellowship*" will be of no service to us, unless we adhere to the "*doctrine,*" which they taught, and the "*worship*" which they practised, (Acts ii. 42.) Idolatry, in particular, is most highly displeasing to God. He declares himself to be a jealous God, and refuses to accept of any worship in partnership with creatures, and with respect to this St Paul declares the total in-

* See Kettlewell's excellent Treatise Of Christian Communion, to be kept in the Unity of Christ's Church, and among the Professors of Truth and Holiness. Works II. p. 594. Bramhall's Works, p. 57. Leslie's Works, I. p. 770. Stillingfleet and Burnet's Conference with some Gentlemen of the Church of Rome. Lond 1676, p 178. Barrow's Works, I. p. 745.

† See APPENDIX, No. V.

compatibility of communicating with Christ and Belial, and commands all christians in such cases, to “*come out from among them, and be separate,*” 2 Cor. vi. 17.

In like manner in the primitive church, if a Catholic Bishop fell into heresy or idolatry, he was deserted not only by his brethren, but by his flock; and obedience was due to him only while he continued orthodox. “We are to adhere (says Irenæus,) to those who, with the succession of their bishoprics, have received the gift of *truth*,” (*Charisma veritatis*;) or, as he says again, “who preserve the *doctrine* of the apostles,” (*qui apostolorum doctrinam custodiunt*, Lib. IV. c. 43. 44.) “They (says Ambrose,) are not *heirs* of Peter, who have not the *faith* of Peter;” again, “if there be any church which rejects the faith, and does not hold the fundamentals of apostolic doctrine, it ought to be forsaken, lest it infest others with its heterodoxy,” (in Lucam 9.). “We must not assent to Catholic Bishops (says Austin,) if they hold any thing contrary to the canonical scriptures;” and although he earnestly persuades his audience to render due respect and obedience to their Bishop, yet he commands them, “if he holds a wrong opinion, not to obey him, although he were an angel,” (See Bramhall’s *Works*, I. p. 746.) “The people may depart and separate from the communion of their Bishop, when he preaches heresy publicly in the church,” (say the canons of the Council of Constantinople, *Can.* 15.) And to withdraw before synodical cognizance (observes Mr Kettlewell,) is not to incur canonical pains, but to shew themselves worthy of that honour which belongs to the orthodox. It is not to condemn Bishops, but Pseudo Bishops their teachers,—not to rend the unity of the church by a schism, but to study to free it

from schisms and divisions. Thus will the people, withdrawing from their heretical teachers “*approve themselves*” in the midst of “*heresies*,” by being steadfast in the truth, (1 Cor. xi. 19.) Thus will they be secured from being “*tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine*,” (Eph. iv. 14.) by means of “*false Christs and false prophets, who shall arise and shall shew signs and wonders to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect*.” Mark, xiii. 22.

When the people have thus disunited themselves from their heretical Bishops, they are then at liberty not to cast off the government of Bishops entirely, but to unite themselves to other *orthodox* ones; either by substituting them into the place of the former, as was done at the Reformation, or else by receiving the benefits of Episcopal and ministerial acts from any others they can meet with. “This they may do (says Cyprian,) as well as mariners, who, when their own port is insecure, pass it by and put in at another,—or, as travellers, when their own inn is beset with thieves, may take up their lodging at another, which is more secure.”

However, in our Reformation there was no necessity to recur to this latter expedient, for it having pleased God to open the eyes of many of our Bishops and clergy, and vast numbers of the laity, to see how far they had departed from the apostolic faith, worship, and government, they all united in the great work of reformation, which was effected not in a tumultuary, but in a regular way, by the seasonable assistance of the civil authority.

II. Hence appears the absurdity of the assertion made by the Romanists, that our Reformed Church separated from the catholic communion when it se-

ceeded from the Bishop of Rome, and that corrupt part of the christian church under his jurisdiction.— For what is catholic communion? It is to communicate in the apostolic Faith, Worship, and Government. If then, our church professes these, it is in catholic communion; on the contrary, the Romanists, who have introduced the most dangerous corruptions into these grand essentials of christianity, are not in catholic communion, but have schismatically divided themselves from it. It is they who *divide* from the apostolic doctrine, and not those who faithfully *adhere* to it, that are the schismatics. “*Mark them that cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them,*” (Rom. xvi. 17.) Such divisions from “*the faith once delivered to the saints,*” (Jude 3.) are only to be cured by reformation, and return to the old way, “*Ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls,*” (Jer. vi. 16.) No time can give prescription against truth; and therefore, had any error been ever so anciently received in any church, yet the pastors of that church, finding it contrary to the “*good old*” apostolic “*way,*” ought to reform it: and the more ancient and inveterate any error is, the more it requires to be attended to. Thus, those nations that were for many hundred years bred up in Arianism, had good reason to reform from that error. Thus will the Church of Rome herself acknowledge, that the Greek Church or our own Church ought to forsake their present doctrines, though they had been ever so long received.

In this dispute with the Romanists concerning schism, we must particularly recollect, that the Catholic Church does not merely consist of the few

christians who are now in existence on earth, but also of our Lord, the apostles, and all the faithful who have lived before us to the present day. It is their principles we must profess, if we wish to continue in the unity of the Catholic Church; and consequently, unless we profess the religion of the apostles as delivered to us in their writings, it is in vain to boast of the name of Catholics.

But, say our adversaries, "how can you pretend to be in communion with the apostles, but by becoming members of the Roman Church, which has a continued succession of pastors and doctrine from the apostles to the present time?" (Hawarden's *Charity and Truth*, p. 85.) But we absolutely deny that the Roman Church has a succession of *pure apostolic doctrine*. Her present doctrines were unknown to the apostles and primitive church, were rejected by many flourishing churches since the first appearance of them, and were never formed into articles of faith, till the packed conventicle of Trent. The Reformed Church in England, Ireland, and Scotland, has not, I grant, a succession of *doctrines* from the apostles' time to the present day; for (as we all know,) the apostolic doctrine and worship was, for several hundred years before the Reformation, entirely obscured in these countries by Popish corruptions. But what then? May not a church, which has been for some time overrun with corruptions, become or recommence Catholic, by returning to "*the old ways*," and re-embracing "*the faith once delivered to the saints*." So Tertullian (*De Præscript.* c. 31.) declares: "In this manner (says he,) will they be tried by those churches which, though they cannot shew any apostle or apostolic man for their founder, yet agreeing in the same

faith are reputed no less apostolic for the consanguinity of their faith :” by this rule, therefore, the most ancient churches are no longer to be accounted apostolic and catholic, than while they preserve that faith without innovations and corruptions, and “ *teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*”

This then, I think, is a sufficient justification of our church in reforming its errors and corruptions, and consequently in asserting the title of Catholic and Apostolic to itself. For, can it be a fault to believe as Christ has taught, and to worship God as he has prescribed? Is it possible that the true catholic faith and worship should ever be a crime? If it be *not*, then it can be no-fault to make the doctrines and institutions of our Saviour the rule of our faith and worship, and that is all we mean by reforming; not to mend the christian religion, but to return to primitive christianity. It is true, we seceded from the unity of the Popish Church by our Reformation, but then this unity was not a pure christian communion; and if it were not, it is no separation from the christian church, to leave its communion in those things which are not christian. And therefore the whole controversy will still turn upon this point, whether our Reformation be a true gospel Reformation; for if we reformed nothing but what ought to be reformed, then we separated no farther than we ought to separate, and such a separation, if it can be called a separation, is no crime. Did Elias separate from the Jewish Church, because he broke their unity in the worship of Baal, and reduced them to the institutions of the Mosaic law, which was the standard of their religion and communion? Did the nation of the Goths separate from the Catholic Church, when it separated

from the Arian heretics, after being infected with Arianism above 200 years*. In the same manner, the Reformed Church did not separate from the Catholic Church, when it seceded from the Roman heresy, and rejected those doctrines which were not christian. Some kind of separation, indeed, there must be between a pure and a corrupt church, but it is the church which *forsakes the truth*, which is criminal and guilty of the separation, not the church which forsakes

* This is a remarkable precedent, which vindicates the proceeding of our Reformation. The Gothic nation had been infected with Arianism 218 years, when by the means of Leander Bishop of Seville, the King Recaredus being duly instructed in the orthodox faith, called a council at Toledo, A. D. 589, wherein Arianism was renounced by the declaration and subscription of the king, bishops, and great men; after which, the council proceeded to make new canons, which the king confirmed by his edict, declaring, "that if any Bishop, Priest, or Deacon refused to observe them, he should be excommunicated; if any of the higher rank of the laity, the penalty was paying half their estates to the exchequer, if others, confiscation and banishment." Some of the latter Spanish historians are much troubled to see every thing done in this Reformation by the king, bishops, and great men, without the least mention of the Bishop of Rome's authority. Lucas Tudensis therefore says, "that Leander was the Pope's legate," but Mariana confesses, "the very acts of the council contradict it." He would have it believed that they sent legates to the Pope, to have the council confirmed by him: but Mariana acknowledges, "that nothing appears in history to that purpose;" and if any such thing had been, it would not have been omitted in the epistles of Gregory, who wrote to Leander a letter of *congratulation* for the conversion of Recaredus. But then national churches were supposed to have power enough to reform themselves, provided that they proceeded according to the decrees of the four general councils.—And this is what we maintain in behalf of our church, that it receives all the *creeds* which were then received, and hath reformed those *abuses* only, which have crept in, to the church since that time. *Stillingsfleet's Ans. to Cath. no Idolaters*, pref. and *Geddes's Tracts*, II. p. 1. 1714.

error ; and therefore it is a ridiculous thing to charge those with the schism, who only forsook the company, when those are the schismatics who forsake the truth. And yet this is the only pretence for the Church of Rome to charge us with schism, that they did not leave us, but we left them ; but it is because they had *first* forsaken the apostolic communion, by corrupting the apostolic faith and worship. They were the deserters and separatists,—we only returned to the true christian communion, and were very sorry to leave them behind us. The short of it (adds Dr Sherlock) is this: If we cannot justify our Reformation we are schismatics,—if we can, we are none ; and I would desire all Protestants to take notice of this short answer, and stick to it ; for it is as certain as any demonstration in Euclid, that no man can be a schismatic, who forsakes no society of christians farther than they forsake the truth.

But, was the Bishop of Rome endued with a portion of infallibility, or was it unlawful on any account to separate from his communion in the primitive ages? No,—all Bishops by *divine* right were equally successors of the apostles, and all equally liable to *error*. By falling into heresy or schism, they were excluded from catholic communion, *i. e.* the communion of all their orthodox brethren ; and on returning or reforming themselves from heretical or schismatical doctrines, they became united to catholic communion. The Bishops of Rome on several occasions incurred the charges both of heresy and schism. For this reason, their brethren were obliged, by virtue of their share in the common Episcopacy, to separate from them, and, if occasion required, to pronounce anathema against them.

Thus, in the second century the Eastern churches abstained from communion with the Bishop of Rome, who was guilty of a schismatical act.—In the third century, the Bishops of Africa and Asia were in a state of separation from him, and declared that he had espoused the cause of heretics; and Firmilian Bishop of Cæsarea pronounced him “cut off from catholic communion.”—In the fourth century, the Bishops of the Synod of Antioch “promised to Julius of Rome peace and communion, if he admitted the deposition of those whom he had expelled; but if he resisted their decrees, they denounced the contrary,” (Sozomen. III. 8.) The Eastern Bishops at Sardica excommunicated and deposed him. Liberius, on his falling into the Arian heresy, was anathematized by St Hilary, (Hilar. *Fragm.* p. 134.) and Acacius Bishop of Constantinople renounced the communion of Felix.—In the 5th century, the African Bishops excluded Vigilius from catholic communion, and their example was followed by the Bishops of Illyricum *. All this evidently proves, that they did not imagine any single person to be the visible head of the whole church; or that all churches and their Bishops were, obliged to be in *communion* with, much less in *subjection* to the Bishop of Rome, whether he was a catholic or an heretic: But it manifestly proves the contrary, that there did not exist in those ages, a *Visible Head*, as is now pretended by the Romanists, to unite all the single churches of the Catholic Church into one communion; but that, in matters of faith,

* *Africani Antistites Vigilium Romanum Episcopum damnatorem capitulorum, synodali ter a Catholica communione, reservato ei penitentiae loco, recludunt. Victor Tunens. Chron. p. 10.*

every Bishop was as much a guardian of the whole church as the Bishop of Rome, and was obliged by the law of God to "preserve pure, that good thing which had been committed to their trust," and reject from his communion, and separate from, and "avoid all that caused divisions or offences, contrary to the doctrine which he had learned *."

But here our adversaries are accustomed to inquire, "If the church in communion with the Bishop of

* "But (say our adversaries,) the church in communion with the Bishop of Rome was the true church, when St Paul wrote his epistle to the Romans, "*Your Faith is spoken of in all the world,*" and is acknowledged by most Protestants to have continued so for many ages. Therefore, unless it can be made out with demonstrative evidence, that she has since forfeited her title, she must still be acknowledged the same true church." *Howarden's True Church*, p. 2. *Manning's Short Way*, p. 84.—If this be any argument at all, it will prove a great deal more than our adversaries would have it, for it will prove as strongly that the church in communion with that of Thessalonica, is the only true church. For does not Paul declare that "*from it sounded out the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad,*" (1 Thess. i. 8.) and thus it may be applied to the church of Alexandria, and several others now in being. But the truth is, in the primitive ages other churches were no more, or in any other manner in communion with the church of Rome, than she was with them; nor was any one of them esteemed the centre of communion from whence all the rest derived their unity.

Do not the scriptures plainly declare that the particular church of Rome may be cut off from the church: "*If thou continue not in his goodness; otherwise thou shalt be cut off,*" (Rom xi. 18. 22.)—Though the chair of Peter were overturned (says Bishop Patrick,) and no where to be found, the Church of Christ would be where it was, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Faith in Christ Jesus, communion with our christian brethren, and subjection to those pastors who are over us in the Lord, are sufficient to make us a church, whether the Pope will or not. *Serm. on St Peter's day.*

Rome, had so far degenerated from the purity of the gospel for so long a period before the Reformation, how did Christ perform his promise to his church, that the gates of hell should never prevail against it. Protestants therefore must shew us, before their Reformation, a church with which they would have communicated, or else confess that the Catholic Church had failed, contrary to Christ's promise."—Now, we maintain that there did exist throughout all ages, a church agreeing with our's in essentials, and to which the promises of Christ must be applied. We do not pretend that, during the dark ages, this church was universally extended over the world, or that its external condition was extremely magnificent and prosperous, for these are not *essential* qualities belonging to the true church, as our adversaries contend, but only variable and changeable. Christ's promise extends no farther than this : that there shall always be, in some part or other of the world, a church maintaining that faith which Peter here professed, and whereon Christ promised to build his church ; but it is not at all implied that the number of believers should always be great, and its condition prosperous. The other texts adduced by our adversaries to prove the continual amplitude, &c. of the church, relate not to the church of all ages, but either to the calling of the Jews, or to the bringing in the fulness of the Gentiles, or to perfect rest from persecution, or to the splendid state of it, when "*kings shall be its nursing fathers,*" &c. some of which have not yet taken place. But, on the other hand, does not our Lord call it "*a little flock,*" (Luke xii. 32.) and has not Paul predicted "*a falling away,*" or great defection from the truth, (2 Thess. ii. 3.)

And it is an undoubted *fact*, that the Church of God has been *occasionally* only, and not *always*, in a flourishing condition, since the first foundation of it. Thus, under the Old Testament, Elijah complains, (Kings xix. 20.) “*They have broken thy covenants and destroyed thy altars and prophets, and I only am left alive, and they seek my life also.*” But amidst this almost universal defection, God declares that he had a small flock not infected with idolatry, “*I have yet seven thousand knees that have not bowed to Baal.*”—In like manner the christian Catholic Church was almost extinguished by the Arian heresy in the fourth century. “The poison of the Arians, (says Vincenius,) had contaminated not a small portion, but almost the whole world, sed pene orbem totum.”—“The whole world groaned (says Jerom,) and wondered that it was become Arian.” To the same purpose Gregory Naz. tells us, that “this heresy seized on the greatest part of the church;” and again “Where (says he,) are those who define the church by multitude, and despise the little flock (*i. e.* the Catholics.) They have the people, but we have the faith.” This heresy (as John Abbas calculates, *Chron. ad. An.* 8.) lasted 266 years. The sect of the Donatists was also very powerful towards the end of the fourth century, being governed at one time by no less than 400 Bishops. “They continued a long time in Africa (says Dupin,) and were powerful enough in the time of S. Gregory to disquiet the Catholics.” And the Pelagian heresy (if we may believe Bradwardine,) had “infected almost the whole world,” *Pref**.

* The term CATHOLIC includes all *faithful* christians from the beginning of christianity to the present day. The church militant

First, with respect to the Waldenses, this learned author has clearly proved that the churches of the diocese of Italy (comprehending the provinces of Liguria, Æmylia, Flaminia, Venetia, the Alpes, and Rhoetia,) maintained and enjoyed during the first eleven centuries, “a light of doctrine of competent purity ; as likewise that the purity of divine worship ever continued among them, notwithstanding that they had a *sprinkling* of that ignorance and superstition which had overflowed the Romish Church, and the greatest part of the Western churches ;” that (although other and more distant churches had been brought under the yoke,) yet they had always maintained themselves independent of the See of Rome till the midst of the eleventh century, when the first attempt to enslave them was made by Nicholas II. who for this purpose sent two legates, P. Damian, and Anselm Bishop of Lucca. We are informed by Damian himself, that “on his arrival at Milan, the clergy stirred up the people to express their discontent against the design of this legation ; they asserted, in the strongest terms, that the Ambrosian Church ought not to be subject to the laws of Rome, and that the Pontiff of Rome had no right at all to judge or dispose of any thing in that See ; that it would be a great indignity if their church, which had always been free under their forefathers, should now, to their extreme reproach, become subject (which God forbid,) to another church.” However the Romish party finally prevailed, and established their bondage and corruptions ; in consequence of which “a party, as

rin's History of the Waldenses and Albigensès, in Papal Usurpations, &c. Lond. 1712. folio.

well of the superior as the inferior clergy, and the sounder part of the people, formed a distinct body, to secure themselves from these corruptions, and this body has continued ever since till the grand Reformation, under the name of Patarines, and afterwards of Waldenses."

Farther, Mr Allix has clearly proved that these churches maintained a succession of Bishops and clergy, professing the essentials of faith and worship, from the time of their first secession from the Romish Church. That the order of Bishops existed among them in a flourishing condition, I shall briefly shew, since this important fact has not been sufficiently taken notice of by our divines. Rayner, their violent enemy, who lived A. D. 1250, acknowledges that they had Bishops in Lombardy, "*Lombardiam intrantes, visitant Episcopos suos*," (*Bib. Pat.* p. 752.) M. Paris (*ad An.* 1243,) speaks of "a Bishop of the Paterines in Cremona, who was deposed by them" for certain crimes. If we cast our eyes on the colonies they sent to different places, we shall find the same discipline in use amongst them. Thus, in the kingdom of Naples they had a Superior, who conferred orders in the city of Aquila, and the same in Bohemia; and in an ancient abridgment of their opinions, recorded by Wolfius (*Lect. Mem. ad. An.* 1160,) they declare that "they absolutely deny the opinion of the Pope's primacy over all churches, and more especially his power over all policies, that is, his power of both swords; neither do they hold that any other orders ought to be retained in the church but those of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons."

The Churches in the provinces of Narbonne and Aquitain (commonly called Albigenses,) preserved

themselves pure and independent till the twelfth century, about which time they seceded from the corrupt churches in communion with Rome. They likewise maintained a succession of Bishops professing the essentials of the pure worship, and "*the faith once delivered to the saints.*" The certain badge and mark of those (pretended) heretics, says Mr Allix, was the having the scriptures in their mother tongue, and Raymond Earl of Toulouse never stirred any where, without taking that holy book with him. Spondanus, a Romish writer, observes that they were once so powerful in France, as to think of setting up one of their Bishops as a general Primate of their order against the Pope; and Dr Cracanthorp remarks out of Bzovius's *Annals*, that there were no less than 140,990 of them miserably slaughtered by the Papists, within the space of 60 years. Rayner confesses that "the Waldenses were more ancient than any other sect, for some said that they had continued from the time of Silvester, and others from the apostles; and there is no country almost where they had not some footing (there is *universality* both of *time* and *place*;) they have a great shew of piety, living uprightly before men, and believing all things aright of God, and all the articles of the creed. Their fault is, that they blaspheme the Church of Rome," (See many testimonies to the same purpose, in Perrin's *History*, c. 5.)

The Waldenses, as has been observed, were not confined only to the country of Piedmont; for we are informed by Rayner, that in his time, A. D. 1250, there were churches of them in Constantinople, Slavonia, Bulgaria, and Dragonicia: and Vignier takes notice that "after the persecution in Picardy, they dispersed themselves into Livonia and Sarmatia."—

Matthew Paris tells us, that "they spread themselves as far as Croatia and Dalmatia ; and had taken such footing there, as to have converted several (Popish) Bishops, that they all paid obedience to one Bartholemew, who came from Carcassone, and created churches and ordained Bishops for them. And moreover, that in the time of Gregory IX. there were great numbers of them in Spain, insomuch that Alexander IV. complains, in one of his bulls, of their being allowed to increase and multiply as they had done. For, in the time of Gregory IX. they had advanced so much in number and credit, as to have ordained Bishops over their flocks, which, coming to the knowledge of the (Popish) Bishops, they were most cruelly persecuted *."

The pure Catholic Church was likewise preserved among the Bohemians, who had seceded from the Popish Church about the beginning of the fifteenth century. The very interesting *History of the Persecutions of the Bohemian Church* was written in Latin by Comenius, the only surviving Bishop that escaped from the last Popish persecution. It was translated into English, Lond. 1650 ; and the learned Mr Bingham does not scruple to pronounce it a *golden book*, (*Works* II. p. 472.) From it we learn, that the Bohemians, being in great distress for want of Bishops, "sent three of their ministers to the Waldenses of Austria and Moravia, to have them ordained Bishops, which was accordingly performed by Stephen and another Bishop, assisted by some Presbyters. From these three, came the *succession of Catholic Bishops* in Bohemia, which continued till their extirpation in the

* *Rayner*. fol. 10. *Vignier. Bibl. Historial*. p. 130. *Mat. Paris, Reign of Henry III.* Gregory IX. in his *Bull.* beginning *Iræ Cunctis*. See *Perrin's History*, Part II. c. 17.

last age by the ill success of the Bohemian war, and the prevalence of the Popish faction." "And in order to prove to the Bohemians the care with which they had preserved the succession, the Waldenses previous to their consecration, declared their origin from Constantine's time, and likewise explained the articles of their faith, and what dreadful persecutions they had hitherto suffered through Italy and France." "Some of them were ordained by the Armenian Bishops also, in 1499, it being found after the strictest examination, that they agreed with them in the essential articles of faith," And it is recorded, that several Popish Bishops came over to them even from Italy, "*for love of the pure religion.*"—And for a farther confirmation of this, within these twenty years (says Mr Thomas,) Bishop Hartman, and another Bishop of the Bohemian brethren, came into England, and were acknowledged by the Bishops of the Church of England, to be as lawful Bishops as themselves; though they had no ordination than what they had derived from the Waldenses. *Answer to J. Owen's Plea, &c. 1711. p. 10.*

Thus even in Europe, we have found the Catholic Church subsisting in opposition to the corruptions of of the Popish party, and maintaining the very same Faith and Worship, in essentials, as our Reformed Church maintains at this day. And thus has God fulfilled his promise to the Western Church at least, and has preserved it against the power of the gates of hell. All sorts of people (says Seisselius their adversary) have several times endeavoured to root them out; and yet, contrary to the opinion of all men, they have still continued conquerors, or at least *wholly invincible.*

Besides these churches in Europe, there were innumerable churches in Asia and Abyssinia, who *never submitted* to the Roman yoke, but always continued free and independent from the apostles' time to the present*, and nothing can be more rooted and invincible, (Mosheim, *Ecc. Hist.* V. 245.) than the aversion which they in general discover to the Romish Church, and which has continued inflexible amidst the most zealous efforts of the Roman Pontiffs to gain them over to their communion. It is not to be denied, that they hold many superstitious customs; yet, not being fundamental, they are not of such consequence as to throw them out of catholic communion, since they maintain the essentials of faith and worship, and have an undoubted succession of Bishops from the apostles †.

A sound and orthodox portion of the Catholic Church has been lately discovered in Malabar and Travancore, by Dr Buchanan. It retains an uninterrupted succession of Bishops professing the apos-

* See *Nectarii Patriarchæ Hierosolymitani Confutatio Imperii Papæ in Ecclesiam*; translated into Latin from the original Greek (printed at Jassy in Moldavia,) by the Rev. Peter Allix. Lond. 1702. Nectarius died towards the latter end of the seventeenth century.

† See *Bramhall's Works*, p. 160. 248. 418. *Stillingfleet's Works* IV. 6. 483. V. 65.

The passage in the homilies respecting the defection of Christendom to idolatry for 800 years (and which is a standing objection in every book or pamphlet published against us,) can be easily reconciled with the foregoing; for it is merely an hyperbolical expression, and relates to the prevalency of the Popish religion. Jerom declares that the whole world groaned under Arianism, yet no one will believe in earnest that the *whole* world was guilty of that damnable heresy. All that he could mean therefore was, that the greater part of Chris-

tolie faith and worship, and agreeable to the doctrine of the Reformed Church in this country. Their Bishop, Mar Dionysius, after conferring with his clergy, delivered the following opinion: "That an union with the English Church, or at least, such a connexion as should appear to both churches practicable and expedient, would be a happy event, and favourable to the advancement of religion."

- I have vindicated the right of the Reformed Episcopal Church, which I have undertaken to defend, to the title of Apostolic and Catholic,—and shall now prove that it maintains all *necessary* Catholic Unity. This unity is of two kinds: the one of subordination, the other of co-ordination. The unity of subordination, *i. e.* the unity of members to their Bishop in the same particular church is essential to catholic unity; and this we do maintain, and have always maintained even under the severest persecution. Blessed be God (says Dr Hammond, speaking of the persecution of the church by the Presbyterians during the civil wars, in the reign of Charles I.) the Church is not invisible.
- It is still preserved in Bishops and pastors rightly ordained, and multitudes rightly baptised, none of which have fallen off from their profession.—*Of Schism*, c. 11.

tendom was of that communion; and thus must we argue with respect to the homily under consideration, (See John. xii. 19.) But if we examine the homily attentively, we shall find that it speaks only of those christians, who had embraced the second Council of Nice. And thus (says Bishop King,) the Armenian, Nestorian, and Indian churches in the East, who never embraced that council, come not under this condemnation; nor the German, French, or English Churches, &c. who for many ages after rejected that council, and the worship of images authorized by it, and never received them before the Reformation by any authentic act. *King's Third Ans. to Manby*. Dub. 1688.

The unity of co-ordination consists, not in union or subordination to one visible head, but in the friendly intercourse of the Episcopal churches with one another, under the "*one shepherd*," Christ Jesus. You are wont to object (says a learned lady speaking of the Church of England, in reply to a Popish Priest,) that she is in communion with no other church, which I know at first sight shocks weak people, and makes them suspect, when you flourish upon this topic, that she is a church by herself,—and like an island, is divided from the whole continent of the universal church. But the Church of England, though a single national church, yet is a collection of many churches in communion with one another, viz. of two famous provincial, and twenty-six large diocesan churches. This great collective Church of England, or rather Church in England, is in communion with several other national churches, as that of Scotland, Ireland, Man, &c. and in heart, will, and desire, she is in communion with all truly Catholic Churches, wheresoever dispersed over the earth *."

Moreover, we maintain all *necessary* unity with *foreign* Reformed Episcopal Churches; for (as I have laid down, c. 1.) where there is no breach of communion,—no declared disowning of each other,—no express denial of any act of communion between distant churches, they may be justly said to be in communion with each other. We maintain, however, a more perfect unity than this, with the Bishops and churches in Canada, Nova Scotia, the United States

* *Mrs Hopton's Letter to a Romish Priest* (F. Turberville,) on her *Return from the Church of Rome*, in *Hicks's Controversial Letters*, Vol. II. p. 147. Lond. 1710.

of America, Sweden, India *, &c. And what is of more importance, all these flourishing churches are in the unity of the *apostolic* and *primitive* communion, and would have been acknowledged by the apostles, had they existed in their days. The whole church (says Augustinè,) which is dispersed everywhere, is Christ's body, whereof he is the head. "And not the faithful who are *now*, but also they who have been *before* us, and which shall be *after* us to the end of the world, all belong to his body," (In Psalm. xlii.) And the Papists (observes Mr Kettlewell,) are lamentably out, and take their aim too narrow, who look only at keeping external union with the assemblies and religious societies of their own place and time, though that be in breaking off from the way and communion of all the faithful christians of other places at that time, and of all that are gone before them; and will make them appear separately from the general assembly of the saints at the last day.

But even although churches may entirely suspend all intercourse with each other; yet if they retain the true faith and worship, by which they are united to Christ the head, they may still continue parts of the Catholic Church. The external peace of the church is indeed broken, and will fall heavy upon the authors of such divisions; but the faithful members cannot be

* These churches, we acknowledge, do not all perform divine service by the same liturgy; this is not essential to catholic communion. The Popish pretence of unity of liturgy is very ridiculous, and is quite of modern date. To the time of the Reformation, the different churches throughout the world had their own forms; even in England, though the *Secundum Usum Sarum* was the most general, yet many others were in use. It were much to be desired, that a still closer connexion subsisted amongst the Reformed Episcopal Churches. See Goulart's note, in page 210.

disunited from Christ, as long as they profess the essentials of christianity. Thus, the division and separation of the apostles Paul and Barnabas did not cut off either of them, or those who adhered to them from the church, or destroy its essential unity.— Neither can we suppose that the violent divisions in the communion of the church, between the churches of Asia and Rome in the second age, and between those of Africa, Asia, and Italy in the third age, shut out all those holy Bishops and martyrs from the possibility of salvation. If not, then there may be different communions among orthodox christians, which may still continue parts of the Catholic Church, and in the unity of Christ's one fold. Indeed, as I have already observed, although in the primitive ages the external communion of a large portion of the Catholic Church was, in general, pretty well preserved,—yet this was merely an accidental circumstance, and took place only among the Bishops of the Roman empire, who might, with the emperor's permission, hold correspondence, or meet in any part of the empire; for there were many great and numerous churches in India, and afterwards in the vast empire of Abyssinia, who neither did, nor could conveniently maintain intercourse with the rest, much less attend the œcumenical synods, which began to be formed in the fourth century.

Thus I have, I hope, sufficiently vindicated the authority of the Reformed Episcopal Church in casting off the usurpation of a foreign Bishop,—justified her against the serious charge of being in a state of separation from catholic communion, and retorted it against our adversaries themselves. The corruptions in faith and worship, with which the church in com-

munion with the Bishop of Rome is infected, and which alone were sufficient to justify our secession from it, even although the supremacy of the Roman Bishop had never been imposed as necessary to salvation, come next to be briefly considered.

I. With respect to Faith, the Reformed Church maintains, that "the holy scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation." The Romanists, on the contrary, "receive unwritten traditions with an equal veneration, as the holy scriptures," *Co. Trid. Sess. 4.*

With respect to the Canon of Scripture, the Romanists, not content with the inspired books, receive also as inspired by God, the books commonly called the Apocrypha, which were never received either by the Jews, "*to whom the oracles of God were committed,*" (Rom. iii. 2.) or by the christian church in all ages.

With respect to the Summary of Faith, the Reformed Church professes the apostles' creed; *explained* by the Nicene or Athanasian creed; the Romanists, on the contrary, have added twelve new articles (all of them containing most notorious falsehoods,) to the apostles' creed, and require all their members and converts to swear that they are in "the true catholic faith, without which no man can be saved, and which they will hold inviolable to their last breath." (Pope Pius's *Creed.*) In this they differ entirely from the Fathers of the primitive church, who expressly declared, that "it should not be lawful to utter, write, or compose any other faith than that which had been defined by the Nicene Fathers; and that if any

dared to offer any other creed, he should be anathematized," (*Council of Ephesus.*) Either then, it is true, that this our creed contains a summary of the points of belief, or it is not. If it be *true*, we are safe enough, and can with no colour of reason be said to err in faith. If it be *not* true, then were all those primitive Fathers as much heretics as we ourselves are.

The new articles added by the Papists to the ancient creed which we profess, relate to their traditions, seven sacraments, transubstantiation, sacrifice of the mass, purgatory, invocation of saints, worship of images, indulgences, Bishop of Rome's supremacy, &c. and other erroneous and dangerous principles. "This new profession of faith (says Bishop Patrick,) which was first published to the world in the sixteenth century, is most impudently pretended to be the true catholic faith, being in no sense catholic, either as to time or place. For it was no where used till they made it, nor is now everywhere believed,—and was not at all believed in any church for above 1500 years, nor is now used in that church itself, when they admit members into it by *baptism*; but they are put into a state of salvation by believing the old Nicene creed alone, which is a direct contradiction to their new creed, which they make necessary to salvation.

There are several pretences made use of to justify these additions:—1. "That they are contained implicitly in the old creed." Now there are several things contained in the old creed, which may be deduced from it by evident consequence, as the Deity of Christ, his two natures, &c. The addition of these by the Nicene Fathers was properly no addition, but an *explication*. But (says Bishop Bramhall,) it is as

possible to draw water out of a pumice, as extract from the old creeds the worship of images, transubstantiation, purgatory, &c. for these are real additions, and not explications of the old creed.—2. “That the old creeds make no mention of the bible, the sacraments,” &c. True, because they are merely *agenda*, matters of practice, which in a large sense are to be believed, because they are revealed. But what we call the *credenda*, or articles of faith, are revealed, because they are to be believed. These are of a *speculative* nature, and of them the creeds are a sufficient summary.—3. It is pretended that “our thirty-nine articles are a new creed.” Now we must distinguish here between *necessary articles of faith*, and the *conditions* of church communion. Of the *former*, our church holds the creeds to be a sufficient summary. But as for the *latter*, we assert that any church may declare its sense of disputed articles of religion, and require of its *clergy* a subscription to them, not to the end that they should be believed as articles of *faith*, but to prevent diversities of opinion. But the Romanists not only require the belief of their errors, but make the belief of them *necessary to salvation*. Our church in her canons, excommunicates those only who *affirm* her articles are erroneous. And what a wide difference is there between not saying they are erroneous, and saying they are *necessary to salvation*!—10,000 articles may be *true*, which are not *necessary* points of *faith*.

The Romish creed, therefore, is that in which we differ ; for as to the christian creed there is no dispute between us, only that we account it sufficient, and will profess none other. We stand for that faith which is confessed on all sides to be truly catholic and apos-

tolic, and disown and abhor that which they have invented only 250 years ago, and which they would impose on us as necessary to salvation. This, then (says Bishop Patrick,) is the difference between us : We are catholics, they are Romans ;—we believe the catholic faith of all christians, they (as distinguished from us,) believe the Roman faith, which none believe but themselves ;—we believe that which has been ever believed, they believe that which was never believed till yesterday, in comparison with the ancient faith ;—ours is the belief of the whole body of christians, theirs the belief of a sect.

The errors and heresies of the Romish Church, with respect to Doctrines, come next to be considered. The principal of those are * :

Their doctrine of Merits.—They maintain, That “ the good works of justified persons are truly and properly *meritorious*, and deserve not only the increase of grace, but eternal life, yea an increase of glory,” (*Council of Trent*, Sess. 6. Can. 32.) Whereas the scriptures tell us, that “ *the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord,*” (Rom. vi. 23.)—“ *When we have done all things which are commanded us, we are still unprofitable servants,*” (Luke xvii. 10.) “ *By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.*” Both faith and salvation itself, which is the end of faith, is all of grace

* See the *PRESERVATIVE AGAINST POPERY*, in three vols. folio. This excellent collection (which, says Mr Le Mesurier, ought to be in every Protestant clergyman's library,) includes the best *TREATISES* on every possible point of controversy with the Papists ; originally composed by the most celebrated Divines in the ever memorable contest with the Papists in the reign of James II. and collected into three vols. by the Right Reverend Bishop Gibson, in 1738.

and gift, "*not of works, lest any man should boast,*" (Eph. ii. 8.) . Good works, we hold, "are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification, but cannot put away our sins or endure the severity of God's judgment, yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God," (Art. 12.) . Yet we deny, that any works of ours are truly meritorious; for we cannot perform good works unless by a power received from God, and how can we merit from God by that which he himself has given us, Phil. ii. 13*.

As for Repentance, they maintain that "it consists of contrition, confession to a Priest, and satisfaction, that is, performing the penance he enjoins; by which when crowned with absolution, it is held that all sins since baptism are forgiven." But this is entirely contrary to the doctrine of the gospel concerning repentance, in which we are taught that it consists of sorrow and change of heart, and amendment of life, by Christ's assistance, (Isaiah i. 16. 17. 18.—Acts iii. 19.) Confession to a Priest, though it may be useful for the ease of the penitent (and in which sense our Reformed Church recommends it,) is no where in scripture made *necessary* for the forgiveness of sin, and is therefore an intolerable imposition upon men's consciences, and changes the terms of salvation from what God himself has appointed.

They maintain, that "men are obliged, partly to

* The following blasphemous prayer is contained in the *Roman Ritual*, (Rome, 1750, p. 75.) and is thus translated by P. Gandolphy in his (Popish) *Liturgy*, 1812, p. 234. "May the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, the merits of the blessed Virgin Mary, and of all the saints; may whatsoever good thou shalt do, or evil thou shalt suffer, be to thee unto the remission of thy sins, the increase of grace, and recompense (*præmium*) of life everlasting.

satisfy the justice of God for their sins themselves; (viz. by alms, fasting, &c.) Christ not having by his Atonement fully answered for all," (*Council of Trent*, Sess. 14. Can. 12.) On the contrary, the word of God declares, "*For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by his life,*" (Rom. v. 10.—Isaiah, liii. 4. 5.—John i. 7.) And therefore no satisfaction to the justice of God is now required from us, for the expiation of any remainder of guilt. But we do not, by this, take away the duties of mortification, prayer, fasting, and alms, &c. for there is a difference to be made between the *acts of christian duties*, and *satisfaction to divine justice* for the guilt of sin, either in whole or in part. And to think of joining any satisfaction of ours together with Christ, is like joining our hand with God's in creating or governing the world.

They pretend "that some persons may satisfy over and above for what is necessary for their own sins; so that their Satisfaction may serve for others that want them, or have not enough of their own," (*Catech. Rom.* p. 2. c. 5.) "And that these are put into the treasury of the church, to be dispensed by indulgences," (*Decret. de Indulg.*) Contrary to the word of God, "*I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin,*" (Psalms xxxii. 5. cxliii. 2.) Now, if God entirely forgives the *guilt* of sin, there remains no obligation to punishment, for where that is, the *guilt* remains. It is true God may not sometimes fully pardon, but may reserve some temporal punishment here for his own honour, or the chastisement of a penitent sinner. But then, why do any men pretend that they

can take off what God thinks fit to lay on? Can any indulgences prevent pain or sickness, or sudden death?—But if indulgences be understood only with respect to *canonical penances*, then they are a most notorious and inexcusable corruption of the discipline of the ancient church.

They say that “there is a Purgatory, or place of torment after this life, for the expiation of the sins of good men, that are not sufficiently purged here; and that the souls there, are helped by the masses, prayers, alms, and other good works of the living,” (Sess. 6. Can. 80.) The scriptures, on the contrary, expressly affirm, “*Whom he justified, them he also glorified,*” (Rom. viii. 30.) But whom God justifies, they have the remission of their sins as to eternal punishment. And if those who are justified must be glorified, what place is there for purgatory? For there is not the least intimation of any other state of punishment, that any who are justified must pass through before they are admitted to glory. We grant they may, notwithstanding, pass through many intermediate trials in this world, but we say where there is justification, there is *no condemnation*; for when any part of guilt remains unremitted, there is a condemnation remaining, so far as the punishment extends. This distinction then, as to eternal and temporal pains, as it is made the foundation of purgatory, is wholly groundless, and therefore the doctrine built upon it can have no foundation in scripture or reason.

The Church of Rome has not only erred in *Doctrines* of faith, but has also grossly swerved from that rule of *Worship* instituted by Christ, and practised by the primitive church; and set up a worship of their own invention, in direct opposition to it, as in having their

public worship in an Unknown Tongue, which is expressly condemned by our Reformed Church, as "a practice plainly repugnant to the word of God, and to the custom of the primitive church," (Art. 24.) And we are ready to stand to the challenge of Bishop Stratford, that we will yield the cause, if they can instance in any church in the world, that, for above 500 years after Christ, worshipped God in a language that they did not understand. And may it not justly be matter of amazement, that for the serving of some poor worldly ends, the Church of Rome should introduce a practice that renders the worship of God useless and insignificant, to the ignorant at least? That destroys not only the end of prayer, but is inconsistent with the nature of it, and so absurd and unreasonable, that St Paul thought they deserved to be reckoned madmen, who attempted such a practice. 1 Cor. xiv. 21.

Their solemn Prayers to Saints departed, and that not only to intercede for them, but to bestow upon them those temporal and spiritual blessings they stand in need of.

Now, for this species of worship there is not only nothing in scripture, but a great deal against it, for there we are frequently taught to offer up our prayers to God alone, through that "*one mediator between God and man, Christ Jesus,*" (1 Tim. ii. 5.) "*No man can come unto the Father but by me,*" (John xiv. 6. 13.) "*We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous,*" (1 John ii. 1.) For "*Christ is entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us,*" (Heb. ix. 4.) and therefore we dare not make other intercessors in heaven besides him. The distance between heaven and us breaks off all communication be-

tween the saints there, and us upon earth ; so that all addresses to them *now* for their prayers, are very different from desiring others on earth to pray for us ; and if such addresses are made in the solemn offices of divine worship, they join the creatures with the Creator, in the acts and signs of worship which are due to God alone. And therefore, as Bishop Stratford remarks, our church had great reason to charge them with idolatry who put up their prayers to saints, because, in so doing, they give that worship to the creature which is due to God alone. *Homily ag. Idolatry.*

With respect to the Virgin Mary in particular, the same reasons make it unlawful and idolatrous to pray to her, as to pray to the other saints. “ *Call upon me* (says God,) *in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me,*” (Psalm l. 15.) When we pray to our Father in heaven, as our Saviour commanded us, we do only what natural religion and christianity require us to do ; but when men pray to the Blessed Virgin for “ help and protection now, and at the hour of death,” they attribute that to her, which belongs only to God, who is our *helper and defender*; and although Christ knew *the dignity of his mother*, above all others, he never gives the least encouragement to make such addresses to her (Mat. xii. 47. 48.) and to suppose her now to have a share in the kingdom of Christ in heaven, as a copartner with him, is to advance a creature to divine honour; and to overthrow the true ground of Christ’s exaltation to his kingdom of heaven, which was his suffering on the cross for us.

In their worship of God by Images*, which our

* Licere in Ecclesiâ imagines habere, et illis *honorem et cultum* adhibere. *Catech. Trid. Trecis*, 1646. p. 443.

church has condemned as idolatrous, and proved it to be such, by the authority of God's word, and by the testimonies of the ancient Fathers, (*Homily ag. Idolatry.*) But here the pretence is, that the adoration is not paid to the image, but to the being whom it represents. Now, what excuse is this but such as the heathens made? When pressed with the absurdity of worshipping stocks and stones, they answered that their worship was paid in effect to God, after whose likeness the image was made, or whom it represented. But this was never allowed by Origen, by Arnobius, or any other of the ancient Fathers, to be a sufficient or available plea. But what need we any distinctions or sophisms about the sort of worship which is paid to images, when the commandment expressly enjoins us "*not to make to ourselves any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing which is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath,*" &c. "*not to bow down to them, nor worship them.*" And in the very delivery of the law to the Jewish nation, when the most express caution was given, a comment, almost impossible to be mistaken, was added, "*Take ye good heed to yourselves (said Moses,) for ye saw no manner of similitude, on the day when the Lord spake to you in Horeb.*" They were not to worship even the true God under sensible representations.

In believing that "in the Eucharist, there is truly, really, and substantially the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of Jesus Christ; and that there is made a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the blood,—which conversion they call *Transubstantiation*," (Pius's *Creed*.)—"The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of

Christ," (1 Cor. x. 16.) This is spoken of the *bread* after consecration, and yet the apostle supposes it to be bread still; and the *communion of his body* is interpreted by the next words, "*For we being many, are one bread and one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread*," (ver. 17.) which is very different from the bread being changed into the *very body* of Christ,—an opinion that has no foundation in the scriptures, and is repugnant to the common principles of reason, which God hath given us. Compare John xv. 1. x. 9.—Exod. xii. 11.—Gen. xli. 26.—1 Cor. x. 4.

In giving divine Worship to the consecrated Bread in the eucharist.—This our church has declared to be "idolatry to be abhorred of all christians," (*Rubric after communion*;) and the scriptures tell us, that "*the heavens must receive Christ, until the times of the restitution of all things*," (Acts iii. 21.) And therefore in the eucharist we adore him, as "*sitting on the right hand of God*," but dare not direct our adoration to the consecrated host, which we believe to be the substance of bread and wine (though consecrated to a divine mystery,) and therefore not a fit object of our adoration *.

That "in the mass (or eucharist) there is offered to God, a true, proper, and propitiatory Sacrifice for

* Is it possible for men to fall into a grosser or more dangerous error, than to set up a *Wafer* for their God, and pay divine worship to a morsel of bread? Shall their good intentions secure them? Had not the *Israelites* a good intention to "hold a feast unto the Lord" when they worshipped the molten calf? Were they therefore not Idolaters for it? (Exod. xxxii. 5.) See also Lev. x.—John xvi. 2. See *Archbishop Wake's Expos. of Doct. of Church of England*, Art. 22.

the living and the dead *. In opposition to this, our church declares, that "the offering of Christ once made, is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin but that alone," (See Heb. x. 10. v. 27. 28. ix. 22. 1 John ii. 2.—Heb. v. 12. ix. 26. x. 26.—1 Pet. iii. 18.)—We admit that the eucharist is a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; but it is a commemorative, and not a propitiatory sacrifice, and we have most justly stigmatized the sacrifices of masses (in which the offering of the elements in the eucharist by priests, is pretended to be effectual to the salvation of others; or that God will remit pain or guilt to persons whether living or dead, and in particular that he will release the souls of the dead out of purgatory, on account of masses offered in their name by priests,) as *blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits*.—Art. 31.

In sacrilegiously forbidding the Cup to the laity, contrary to the institution of Christ, and the express words of the apostle, who, speaking* to all communicants, plainly shews, that the institution of Christ was; That all should partake of both kinds, and so continue to do, as long as this sacrament was to shew forth the death of Christ, viz. till his second coming: "*For as long as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew forth the Lord's death till he come,*" 1 Cor. xv. 26.

The corruptions of the Romish Church with respect to Government, in requiring all persons to acknowledge "the holy, catholic, apostolic, and Roman

* This is another consequence of the corporeal presence of Christ in the eucharist; and, according to Archbishop Wake, "one of the most dangerous errors that offends us."

Church for the Mother and Mistress of all churches; and to promise true obedience to the Bishop of Rome, Successor of St Peter, Prince of the apostles, and Vicar of Jesus Christ" (*Trent Creed*,) has been already examined and refuted at large.

In all these instances, and in many more that might be given, the Faith, Worship, and Government of the Romanists bear a manifest repugnance to the gospel; and consequently, so far from being a Catholic Church, they are one of the most heretical and schismatical churches in the world,—and this has been the opinion of all Protestant divines since the Reformation. It was not we who left your church (as the learned Stillingfleet observes,) but your church that left her primitive faith and purity in so high a manner, as to declare all excommunicate who will not approve of and join in her greatest corruptions; though it be sufficiently manifest, that they are great recessions from the faith, piety, and purity of that Roman Church which was planted by the apostles, and had so large a commendation from the apostolic men of those first ages. Since then, such errors and corruptions are enforced upon us as conditions of communion with you, by the same reason that the orthodox did very well in departing from the Arians, because the Arians had already departed from the church by their false doctrines; will our separation from you be justified, who first departed from the faith and purity of the primitive church,—and, not only so, but thrust out of your communion, such as would not depart from it as far as you. *Works*, IV. 325.

Great pains have been taken of late by Popish divines, to endeavour to shew that we not only acknowledge a possibility, but even a *certainty* of sal-

vation in the Romish Church. But this is notoriously false. We hope (to use the words of Archbishop Wake,) *honest* men may be *saved* in your *communion*; but we are sure they *shall be in ours*. Whether God will condemn you for professing *errors* that you do not know to be such, we cannot tell, we believe he will not; sure we are he would damn us, should we, who are convinced of your *corruptions*, be seduced by any base motives to go over to you. And this is enough for *us* to know,—the other is *your concern*, and do *you look to it*, (*Second Defence of Exposition of the Doctrine of the Church of England*, P. II. p. 26.) He who forsakes the Church of England for fear of schism, to join in a stricter communion with the Romish Church, plungeth himself in greater and more real dangers, both of *schism*, and *idolatry*, and *heresy*, (Archbishop Bramhall's *Works*, p. 152.) All those who are in the Church of Rome, do run so great a hazard of their salvation, that none who have a care of their souls, ought to embrace it or continue in it. Bishop Stillingfleet, V. 1. Bingham's *Works*, II. 804. Barrow's *Works*, I. 783.

To conclude with a learned divine of the Church in England. As for the Papists amongst us, their mistakes in faith and worship are so gross and foul, that if they would give themselves a little time to consider what has, and what may farther be said to convince them, I do not doubt but all of them that are endued with a competent understanding and an honest sense of things, would soon feel those palpable errors, into the belief and practice of which they have been hitherto deluded by an unreasonable deference to the authority of the Church of Rome, and no longer stand off from the reformed communion. The

bigger any fault is, one would think it should be more easily espied. Now these men separate from us, merely because we have abandoned those wicked doctrines and practices, which are of themselves a most necessary cause of separation from any church in the world, that should impose them; and therefore, they are of all men the most notorious *schismatics* that can be imagined. And I beseech God to open their eyes to see it, and to recover into the *way of truth, all such as have erred and are deceived*, that those, who have hitherto been obstinate, may *prove all things*, and that those who can be persuaded to consider these things, may *hold fast that which is good*. Dr Clagett's *Difference of the Case*, &c. p. 70*.

* In the foregoing defence of our Reformed Church, we must recollect that its Reformation is defended, only as far as relates to the resumption of its primitive rights as a free Episcopal Church; as for the *Manner of Proceeding* in our Reformation, this has been ably vindicated, amongst others, by Bishops Burnet and Smallridge, and Drs Saywell and Clagett, in answer to Saunders, Varillas, Walker, &c. But it is proper to state, that it is not material what were the true motives of Henry VIII. or any others, who were engaged in a struggle with the Popish usurpations; for Jehu did a good work when he destroyed the idolatry of Baal, though neither his motives nor his manner of proceeding in it were justifiable. Our religion has no dependance on the historical relations of any mens' actions: God's Truth and Revelation is the ground we depend upon.

CHAP. V.

THE IMPRACTICABILITY OF AN UNION BETWEEN THE
REFORMED EPISCOPAL AND PRESENT ROMAN CHURCH.

POPERY, as Archbishop Wake long since observed, in its proper colours is so unlike catholic christianity, that it is in vain ever to hope to promote it, if it appears in its own shape. It is necessary, therefore, that the religion, like the prophet, should come in *sheep's clothing*, and the heresy be made to look as orthodox as possible. Some things are *denied*, others *mollified*, all *disguised*, and a double benefit thereby obtained. Popery is to be received as a very innocent harmless thing, and the Protestants, especially the ministers and first reformers, represented to the world as a sort of people that have supported themselves by calumny and lies, and made a noise about errors and corruptions, which are no where to be found but in their own brains or books, and which the Church of Rome detests as well as we.

None pursued this method of *disguising* the Romish doctrines and practices, with such dexterity and art, as Bossuet in his *Exposition of the Catholic Faith*. But the perfidious sophistry of this author was satisfactorily unmasked by Archbishop (then Mr) Wake, in his *Exposition of the Doctrine of the Church of England*, and his two *Defences of that Exposition*, 1687. It was attempted also by the author of the *Papist Misrepresented and Represented*, and in a book entitled an *Agreement between the Church of England and Rome*. The former of these was answered by Drs

Stillingfleet and Clagett, in 1687 ; and the latter by Dr Sherlock and Mr Williams, in 1688. Methinks, says Dr Sherlock, it argues some distrust of their cause, that they dare not downright defend it, but are forced either to *represent* it away almost into Protestant heresy, or to shelter themselves in their *agreement* with a Protestant Church ; but the best way is, to turn Protestants themselves, and then we will own our agreement with them.

Being overturned in their attempts to recommend their doctrines by means of books written professedly by Romanists, they endeavoured next to promote them under the *disguise* of ministers of the Church of England, and accordingly they published, in 1703, *An Essay for Catholic Communion, by a Minister of the Church of England*. This attempt to disguise Popery under a Protestant name and dress (says the Rev. Nath. Spinckes, the learned confuter of it,) is such an instance of *treachery* and *insincerity*, as would put any impartial observer out of hope, that any good can come from so unfair an adversary. Had he pulled off his mask, every body must have owned him as a generous adversary. But this would not answer his design, which was under the notion of a friend to get into our bosoms, and to find an opportunity of instilling his poison, before he was suspected. Besides this answer of Mr Spinckes, there was another by the Rev. Samuel Grascome, entitled *Concordia Discors*. Mr Spinckes's answer is well worthy of being reprinted*.

* Since the first edition of this Treatise was published, a new edition of the *Essay* has been sent into the world, most impudently dedicated "to the Parliament and Subjects of the United Kingdom," and styled in the disgusting cant of the times, "*a Liberal*

The very same paltry arts of misrepresentation and fraud, the emissaries of Rome are pursuing at this day. Bossuet's *Exposition*, and the *Papist Misrepresented*, have been lately reprinted in England, and in this country we have been favoured with a *Protestant*

Essay!" Lond. 1812. There has also been lately published, by a Mr Nightingale (a Dissenter, formerly a Methodist preacher,) what he calls *A Portraiture of the Roman Catholic Religion*, Lond. 1812. He must surely possess a very slight degree of acquaintance with the nature of that religion, when he takes up its tenets, not from its authorised creeds, catechisms, and public offices, but from the *Papist Misrepresented*, the work of an obscure author, and which, as has been plainly proved, contradicts the standard doctrine of that church. "Though that religion, as varnished by the French expositor (Bossuet,) and English representer (Gother,) observes one who had formerly been a professor in the Romish Church, appear not so deformed; yet if we barely considered it as delivered in Pope Pius's Creed, we shall find it black enough. If we gather it from their public offices, authorised devotions, and general practice, we shall find it of a deeper dye. The old spirit still remains;—the king-killing doctrine as much countenanced at Rome as ever:—we still find people obliged to obey without reason, to believe against sense, and to pray without understanding," (*Aylmer's Recantation Sermon, preached at St Martin's, Oxford, Sept. 30. 1713, p 7.*) He must be equally unacquainted with the arts of that church, when he speaks of the *Essay for Catholic Communion*, as written by a "pious and learned minister of the Church of England," and pronounces it a "most excellently well-meant essay," and a "valuable work," and at the same time adopts the sentiments contained in it, as the real and genuine doctrine of the Romish Church.— Since he has made use of a quotation from Baxter as a motto, I beg leave to recommend to him another, from the same author: "We fear the masked Papists and infidels more than the barefaced, or than any enemy." *Key for Catholics* in Ep. Ded. See also *The Missionary's Arts Discovered, or An Account of their Ways of Insinuation, their Artifices, and Methods of which they serve themselves in making Converts*, Lond. 1688; a very curious and amusing pamphlet, but extremely scarce.

Apology for (what is called) *the Catholic Church*, Dub. 1809, in which, Popery is pretended to be proved from the testimonies of Protestants *. But this is an old trick, attempted above 200 years ago by one Brerely, whose book, likewise entitled a *Protestant Apology*, was completely exposed and confuted by Bishop Morton, in his *Catholic Appeal*, 1610, in which he produces, on our behalf, as many confessions of Papists, as Brerely produced of *pretended* ones of Protestants, on behalf of the Romish Church.

To this author's testimonies, produced from the writings of foreign Protestants, I briefly reply with Bishop Bramhall,—that whatever were the opinions of private errors of Calvin, Luther, or the Magdeburgenses, or other *foreigners* (whom he quotes in abun-

* It is most surprising that any men of sense should attempt to convince us of the truth of Popery, by the garbled testimonies of a few Protestants? Ought they not to have known, that our rule of faith, is not the fallible testimony of any modern doctor whatsoever, but the inspired gospel of Christ? "We have often told you (says Archbishop Wake,) that our faith depends not on any *human authority*. Such concessions may shew the *weakness or error* of him that made them, but they are nothing available to prescribe against the *truth of the gospel*," (*Second Defence of Exposition*, Part II. p. 9.) It were anxiously to be wished, in order to the bringing of controversies to a speedy decision, that all parties should lay aside such inconclusive methods of attack and defence, and appeal only to those testimonies, which are acknowledged to be valid and conclusive in the opinion of the respective disputants, such as the holy scriptures, and, in subordination to them, the creeds, confessions of faith, &c. This principle I have adopted in this edition, and have, in consequence, omitted a great number of the *mere confessions* of adversaries which were retained in the former (except those relating to modern matter of fact.) My reasons for making use of the quotations from our own divines in expressing my thoughts, have been already sufficiently accounted for in the Preface to the first edition.

dance,) he ought not to have charged them on our Reformed Church ; for they were mere strangers to our affairs, and many of them died before controversies were rightly stated, or truly understood, and for none of whom *our church* is obliged to be responsible. As for his quotations from *our English writers*, I answer, that in general, he mangles and misapplies them contrary to the true sense of the author, as I have proved in several instances, and quotes them in such a manner, that, upon enquiry, they appear to be directly and positively against him, as has been clearly shewn by Mr Spinckes in his *Answer to the Essay for Catholic Communion*, and by Bishop Morton. But I cannot see, why the authority of some *very few persons* should bear sway against the constant opinion of our church ever since the Reformation. Thus, as for our charge of *idolatry* against the Church of Rome, if Mr Thorndike held something singular on this subject (but which he changed before his death,) is his opinion to be esteemed the judgment of the church, contrary to the constant opinion of all our most learned bishops and divines (even Montague, Heylin, and Laud,) ever since the Reformation ?

To this pretended *Apology* there is prefixed an *Introduction*, in which the author, finding it impracticable to vindicate the Roman doctrines and practices upon *true catholic* principles, palliates every thing that appears shocking, denies others, plead for others that they are not obligatory, and represents all in general as nearly approaching to the principles of our church.

But we must observe that this author's exposition of the doctrines of the Romish Church, is very different from what they are represented in their coun-

cils, creed, and in the generality of their learned writers, and from what their church does really profess and their people continually practise, especially in Italy or any other Popish countries. But Protestants are not to be told all at once ; there are several mysterious and important things, which are not fit to be communicated to those whom they are endeavouring to bring over to the Romish Church. These things must be reserved till their proselytes are got into safe-custody, and afterwards, when they have given away all liberty of judging for themselves, and “ must receive the interpretation of scripture, in the sense in which holy mother church hath held and still holds it,” (Pius’s *Creed*, Art. 14.) then they may be entrusted with the discovery of even the greatest absurdities, for they have gone too far to recede ; and if they discover any hesitation, or give suspicion of their being shocked at such discoveries, their sincerity is immediately questioned, and where their church has power in her hands, they must expect some motherly correction for their pains ; and it is well if they escape being burnt for heretics.

It might have been justly expected that this writer (treating professedly of a reconciliation between the churches of England and Rome,) should have presented us with clear and evident proofs from scripture and antiquity, of the lawfulness and necessity of half communion, purgatory, Bishop of Rome’s supremacy, transubstantiation, prayers in an unknown tongue, sacrifice of the mass, &c. and whether the apostles would have rejected our communion for those reasons, for which the Church of Rome now rejects it.

But instead of entering into particular points of controversy, and proving their faith, worship, and go-

vernment to be agreeable to scripture and antiquity, our adversaries (and this one amongst the rest,) choose rather to dispute and wrangle about general and intricate matters, and wave those which are capable of being made plain and evident to the meanest capacities. So that, though in particular controversies it often appears as clear as light, on which side the truth is (as whether prayers ought to be in a known tongue, whether the communion ought to be given in both kinds, whether the scriptures are to be read by the people, whether confession to a priest is necessary to the forgiveness of sins, &c.) yet in order to avoid these, they run into the general controversies of *infallibility, church authority, confession of adversaries, resolution of faith, &c.* where there is more room for cavil and sophistry, and by which means they can lead men, if not into *scepticism*, yet into a *maze* and *labyrinth*, from whence they shall not easily extricate themselves *. Their usual method, is to wave all par-

* *Mr Payne's Exam. of Bellarmin's Sixth Note. Preserv. Tit. 3. p. 105.* Which way of theirs seems to me (says Mr P.) just as if a person, in a plain controversy about weight or measure, should, to avoid *that*, think fit to run into the perplexed dispute, what is the true standard of weight and measures, or whether matter consists of divisible or indivisible parts; and at the same time would not be brought to yield, that a pound was heavier than an ounce, or an ell longer than an inch.—Another art of theirs is, to deny that errors have come into a church, merely because the punctual time of their coming cannot be assigned. But will any one question the birth of an infant, because he cannot know the time of its conception? Will any one deny there are tares in the field, because he did not see them sown? and our Saviour has told us, that the "*time of sowing tares by the enemy, was when the men were asleep.*" So we say, that the errors of your church came in, in a time of great *ignorance*, and when little notice was taken of them, (See *Tillotson's Rule of Faith*, Part III. sect. 7. and *Preserv. Tit. I. p. 10. 30.*

ticular disputes, and to attempt to prove that some church must be infallible, and that the Church of Rome is that church. This they pretend to be the shortest way to end controversies.

32.)—We may have sufficient reason to judge what are errors in a church, though we cannot fix on the time when they came in, viz. by comparing them with that rule of faith which is delivered down by an uninterrupted tradition to us, and with the practice of the first ages of the christian church. What is apparently contrary to either of these, we have reason to reject, though we cannot exactly determine when it came in.—We have never declined this challenge, as our learned writers have proved to the world. See *Stillingfleet's Defence of Archbishop Laud*, p. 316.

At another time, they endeavour to shift off the true state of the question, by attacking the "scandalous characters" of Luther and other Reformers of the sixteenth century. But, even granting that these were such vile characters, it amounts to nothing against our cause, for we never made them the pillars and grounds of the gospel, or the rule of our faith. But if this argument be valid, what shall we think of the Roman Church, which has had for its heads some of the greatest monsters in nature: "Fifty Popes (says Cardinal Baronius, *ad An.* 897.) rather apostatical than apostolical, *homines monstrosi, vita turpissimi, moribus perditissimi, usquequaque fœdissimi.*" But, says Mr Manning, the Protestant rule of faith, is scripture interpreted by a man of sound judgment. Now, if Protestants stand to this principle, they are all equally accountable for every thing taught by their reformers, even when they contradict one another, (*Shortest Way*, p. 175.) This objection (as Bishop Grove remarks,) is the complete epitome of the well-known Popish book, entitled *Pax Vobis*. But let us see, how Mr M. will defend his church against the force of his own consequence. The Popish rule of faith, he tells us, is scripture, as interpreted by the Pope and Council; therefore by this way of inference, whatever Thomas, or Suarez, or Bellarmine, or any other of sound judgment, that owns this rule, have taught or may teach, must be the doctrine of the Church of Rome. If he thinks to excuse his church, by saying, that their authors may mistake the sense of Pope and Council he cannot be so ignorant, as not to know that we believe that ours too may sometimes mistake the sense of scripture. So that hither-

Now, not to shew *at present* how vainly the Church of Rome challenges to herself the title, privileges, &c. of the Catholic Church; nor to examine the texts, on which this pretence of infallibility is founded *. I only say, that when such errors and corruptions are notoriously evident, though but in any *one* instance, to argue that the church has not erred, because she cannot err, is to dispute against matter of fact, like the philosopher disputing against the possibility of motion; and no argument whatever, is good against matter of fact. True, it will be replied, if it were notoriously evident that the church has erred, there was an end of her infallibility; but this is matter of dispute, whether she has erred or not, and then if you can prove that she cannot err, you effectually prove that she has not erred.—By no means; for if she is charged with errors, and plain evidence brought that she has actually erred, unless you can as plainly take off this evidence, it weakens and overthrows all the proofs for infallibility. And therefore, when they *begin* with the proof of infallibility, they begin at the *wrong end*; for when the church is charged with error, if they would not lose their labour they must prove that she has *not erred*, before they prove her to be infallible, for otherwise, after all the pains they have taken to prove her infallibility, if they cannot deliver her from the charge of having erred, their labour is lost; and therefore it is best to try that first.

Accordingly, to the objection “that our Saviour

to we stand, at least, upon equal terms; nay, I am sure, any misapplication of the rule, is much more pardonable in a church that never thought herself infallible, than it can be in that one that pretends to be so. *Bishop Grove's Answer to P. V. Pres. V. 60.*

* APPENDIX No. V.

would not permit the Church of Rome to give the laity the communion in one kind, if it were unlawful to do so." Bishop Stillingfleet justly answers, that the argument is stronger the other way ; the Church of Rome forbids the doing of that which Christ enjoined ; therefore it cannot be infallible, since the command of Christ is so much plainer than the promise of infallibility to the Church of Rome. Whatever Christ promises he will certainly perform ; and if the Church of Rome *has erred*, he never promised she should be infallible. And therefore, if it appear that the Church of Rome has erred, our interpretation of those texts, which are alleged to prove infallibility, are to be preferred before the Popish interpretation, especially when the evidence we have that she has erred, is much more plain and notorious, than that Christ has promised that she shall not err.

And thus their *short way* to end disputes and confute heretics, is mere sophistry and imposture ; and if men would be sincere and honest, they must not flatter themselves with an opinion of the church's infallibility, but must *examine* the *particular* disputes between us, and be thoroughly satisfied that the Church of Rome has *not* erred, before they *continue* in her communion ; for, even according to Mr Manning (*Short Way*, Pref.) " it is a *vain attempt* to prove the Church of Rome infallible, as long as this popular prejudice (*i. e.* the charge of many gross errors,) subsists against her." So that, according to Mr Manning and Bellarmin's Sixth Note, if the Romanists are desirous of a *reconciliation* between the churches of England and Rome, they must lay aside their noisy pretensions to infallibility, and prove their *doctrines* and *practices* to be agreeable to *scripture* and *antiquity*.

I must again call upon you, says the learned Doctor Hickee, to tell me where the Roman Church, *i. e.* the religion of the present Roman Church, was for 500 years after the first preaching of Christ? Shew me *antiquity, universality, and succession* through those centuries for your Trent doctrines? If you do not answer this challenge, you must give us leave to think that your silence proceeds from the sense you have, that those ages afford no evidence for the Popish part of your religion, but only for that ancient and sound part which we have retained. Your interest likewise obliges you to do it, because, if you can, you will put an end for ever to the controversy, and not only convert us, but the whole Protestant world.

Had the Church of Rome been able to defend her innovations by reason or antiquity, she had never thought of infallibility; for the origin and progress of her innovations have been so often and so clearly made out, and their church's errors so irrefragably exposed, amongst others by Bishop Stillingfleet, as to these six points: *The authority of tradition, the canon of scripture, the merit of good works, the number of sacraments, the use of scripture in the vulgar tongue, and auricular confession*; as to *saints' worship* and *extreme unction*, against Condom, by Dr Clagett; as to *the celibacy of the clergy*, against Walker, by Mr Tully and Mr Wharton; as to the *Latin service, image worship, half communion, and traditions*, against Mumford's *Question of Questions*, by Dr Whitby; as to *images*, by Mr Pelling, against *Nubes Testium*; as to *transubstantiation* and *purgatory*, by Drs Clagett and Wake, to name no more at present, that they have no way of vindicating themselves, but by pretending to condemn their opposers, whom they see they cannot answer. And

indeed if *true antiquity* had been on their side, what need had they of *spurious* and *counterfeit* authors, to make some appearance of antiquity with? And this is reason enough to suspect their pretences to antiquity, for no man takes sanctuary in falsehood who has truth on his side.

I grant indeed, that they profess the greatest regard for scripture and antiquity, and swear not to interpret scripture otherwise than according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers; and this (as Bishop Stillingfleet observes) is one of their *grand artifices*, to make a great noise of scriptures, fathers, and councils, amongst those who understand them least, while, at the same time, they rely implicitly on the authority and infallibility of the present church, and regard its decrees more than all antiquity, or the sense of the apostolic church*.

They pretend indeed, not to determine any thing

* What little respect the Romanists bear to the ancient Fathers is evident from the *Index Expurgatorius*, which corrects them, and orders the leaving out of such passages as oppose their errors. "So long as they think they can make them serve their turns, then *who but the Fathers?* If they appear refractory, and will not serve as *hewers of wood and drawers of water*, then *who are the Fathers?* (It is the church's judgment they rely on, and not the Fathers." *Stillingfleet's Works*, IV. 143. *Preserv. Tit.* 3. p. 3. *Comber's Roman Forgeries in the Councils*, 1673. *James's Corruption of the Fathers*. *Comber's Advice to the Roman Catholics*, sect. 3. *Sir H. Lynde's By-way*, Lond. 1632. p. 257.) Boxhornius, Professor at Louvain, gives the following memorable account of himself: That having been employed by the Inquisitors to strike out, at least, 600 places of the ancients, which seem to make against the Romish doctrines, he was so troubled in mind about it, that it was an occasion of his turning Protestant, and made him resolve to quit that religion which could not defend itself without such manifest impostures. *De Euch. Lib.* III.

contrary to scripture, or to the primitive church, but they make themselves the *only judges* of both. "I admit the holy scripture according to that sense which our holy mother the church has held, and *does hold*, to which it *belongs*, to *judge* of the true sense and interpretation of the scriptures," (*Trent Creed*.) They tell us they make no *new* doctrines, but they reserve to themselves the power of declaring what doctrines are new and what are not; and then I can see little difference between their *making* and their *declaring* new articles of faith, since it is their declaring that makes them to be believed and received as *such*, when they were not to be so before. In short, every thing is to be brought to the standard, not of scripture and antiquity, but of the present Romish Church*; and this, every one must perceive, is absolutely destructive of *permanency* of doctrine, and *settlement* of religious opinions.

* Or, as Dr Milner expresses it, that "*speaking living tribunal* for deciding all controversies, which Christ has established in her. This tribunal is the clear audible voice of *her supreme head*, and her other chief pastors." He says it is a sectarian method to ask a Bishop for his reason, "and to call upon him to argue the points at issue with them; whereas the whole question is, what does the *living Catholic Church* believe and teach?" Even the decrees of the last Pope are already become "a dead letter, as much as the epistles of St Peter are. They both equally require the living voice and authority of the chief pastor, to pronounce upon their meaning with respect to all controversies that grow out of them," *i. e.* they must be understood only as the living Pope, who has succeeded him, thinks proper. Now, since Popes have contradicted each other, as it is notorious they have done, and we are not allowed to go to the "dead letter," how shall a man know what he is to believe. *Milner's Suppl. to Past. Letter*, p. 7. 8. *Le Mesurier's Address to Rom. Cath.* p. 115.

On the contrary, our Reformed Churches make scripture and, in subordination to it, antiquity, the standard of their doctrines, and direct that none of their preachers shall teach the people any thing to be held and believed, but what is consentaneous to the doctrine of the Old and New Testament, and what the catholic fathers and ancient Bishops have gathered out of that very doctrine." Our arms are stretched out (to use the words of Bishop Sage,) to embrace as our christian brethren, and we are ready to communicate with all those, who are willing to profess the FAITH, and join in the WORSHIP, and submit to the GOVERNMENT, which obtained in the Catholic Church *during the first four centuries*; with all such we are forward to unite, we are earnest to give them the right hand of fellowship, and hold communion with them. It is neither number, nor outward splendour, nor prevalency, nor worldly prosperity;—it is nothing but conformity to Christ's institutions, and catholic principles founded thereon, that can constitute a lawful communion. And what is yet our greater comfort, our communion is such, as, we have no manner of reason to doubt, would have been readily owned for a true, lawful, orthodox, christian communion by the Catholic Church, in the days of the first Council of Nice and upwards, to the days of the apostles. *Letters*, p. 131.

Such (I may venture to affirm,) are the terms on which our Reformed Churches are willing to come to an accommodation with the Church of Rome. But, until the pretence of infallibility be relinquished on their side (says Bishop Stillingfleet,) to talk of accommodation is folly, and to design it madness. If the

Church of Rome will allow of nothing to be amiss, how can she reform any thing? And how can they allow any thing to be amiss, who believe they can never be deceived? So that while this arrogant pretence of infallibility in the Roman Church continues, it is impossible there should be any reconciliation*.

* Since the publication of the first edition of this book, another reconciler has made his appearance. The Popish worship has been reduced into the form of our common prayer, by the Rev. P. Gandolphy, who, as he asserts, has thus "exhibited religion to his Protestant countrymen, as professed in the *Catholic Church*!" Even from this production (published without any authority from his superiors,) it is easy to perceive, that no other terms will answer them on our side, but blind submission to their authority. It appears to me (says the author,) that the only means of attaining this desirable object of Catholic Union, are humility of heart and an obedient faith: that is, the will of the community must absorb that of the individual, and private judgment must yield to the sacred authority of Christ's Church," &c. (mark here, how fallaciously these two are confounded as if they were all one, viz. an obedient faith, and yielding to the authority of the Romish Church.)

Our author deeply laments the divisions of Christendom, and anxiously wishes his readers to believe, that there can be no other remedy for them, but by yielding up our sacred right of private judgment to the guidance of Popish Bishops and Priests. But (as the great Chillingworth observes,) "*we must not do evil, to avoid evil,*" neither are all courses presently lawful, by which inconveniences may be avoided. If all men would submit themselves to the chief-mufti of the Turks, it is apparent there would be *no divisions*; yet unity is not be purchased at so dear a rate. It were much to be desired that there were no divisions; yet difference of opinions in controverted points, is rather to be chosen than *unanimous concord in damned errors*. *Amica Pax, magis amica Veritas*. It is not by sacrificing the truth, that any real union can be established. See some excellent remarks on the restoration of Catholic Union, in the *Bishop of Durham Visitation Charge*, 1810. and *British Critic*, Feb. 1811. p. 152.

(*Works* V. 69.) Moreover, they must not only lay aside these absurd pretensions, but treat with us as possessing a full equality of right and power with themselves. When a reconciliation was attempted to be effected between the churches of England and France in the year 1719, several letters passed between the Doctors of the Sarbonne, and Dr Wake, Archbishop of Canterbury. Dr Wake thus expresses himself in a letter to Mr Beauvoir, "If Dr Dupin thinks we are to take *their* direction what to retain, and what to give up, he is utterly mistaken. I am a friend to peace, but more to truth. And they may depend upon it, I shall always account our church to stand upon an *equal* foot with theirs; and that we are no more to receive laws from them, than we desire to impose any upon them. In short, the Church of England is free and orthodox; she has a *plenary authority* within herself, and has no need to recur to any other church to direct her what to retain, or what to do. Nor will we otherwise than in a *brotherly* way, and in a *full equality* of right and power, EVER consent to have any treaty with France. And therefore if they mean to deal with us, they must lay down this for the *foundation*, that we are to deal with one another upon equal terms." Dr Dupin consented to this scheme so far as to acknowledge, that "an union between the French and English Bishops may be completed, or at least advanced, without consulting the Roman Pontiff, and that without his consent the union would be valid." This noble opportunity of shaking off the papal yoke, and reforming the Gallican Church, was unhappily lost, on account of its not being supported

by the civil power. Mosheim's *Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. VI.

The first step towards restoring the Romish communion to the primitive faith and worship, must undoubtedly consist in the renunciation of the usurped supremacy of the Bishop of Rome. Unless the Bishops in that communion step forward, and boldly assert their ancient rights, and renounce that oath (unheard of in the primitive ages,) by which they are bound by the strongest ties to the Romish Bishop, a reformation will never be effected. The reformation of that church at the Council of Trent, was principally prevented by the arts of that usurper. Could it be supposed, says Bishop Stratford, that his holiness would consent to be so degraded that he would pull down with his own hands that pompous fabrick, which for 1000 years he had been raising? When Satan casts out Satan, we may then expect that the Pope will in good earnest endeavour a reformation. Besides the Bishops, and the rest of the governing part of the churchmen, were several ways engaged to submit themselves to, and follow the Pope's conduct: so that supposing they had any good wishes for a reformation themselves, yet both their tongues and their hands were so tied up, that they might neither speak or act, for the promoting of it, without leave from his holiness. Farther, they were in a particular manner enslaved to his pleasure, 1st, by an oath; 2d, by interest.

1. Every Popish Bishop at his consecration had taken an oath, "from that time forward to be faithful to St Peter, and to the holy Roman Church, and his lord the Pope, and his successors; to help them, to defend and keep the papacy, and the rules

of the fathers," &c. And though one would think this oath were enough ; yet, as if it had left them too much at liberty, several additions have been since made to it, by which he has bound them more closely to their good behaviour (and therefore renders reformation more desperate.) "The rules of the holy Fathers," are changed into "the royalties of St Peter." They swear to be "obedient," as well as "faithful," not only to endeavour to "preserve and defend the rights, honours, privileges, and authorities of the Pope," but "to increase and defend them," yea, "to the utmost of their power to cause the Pope's commands to be observed by others, as well as to observe them themselves;" together with many other things not contained in the oath of Gregory VII.

2. For those whose consciences are so debauched, as to dispise an oath, he has secured them by worldly interest. For what will not such men do for riches and honours? And from whom can they hope for these, so soon as from his holiness? The cardinals are all creatures purely of his own making, and no man can be a Bishop or Abbot, without at least being allowed and confirmed by him. This is the only argument that prevails with many to be fast friends to the Papacy. Richer justly observes, with respect to Cusanus's revolt from the Council of Basil to the Pope's side, "by this we know that many who defended the truth, while they were poor, desert the same in hope of dignities, and a richer fortune, and especially moved with ambition of the Cardinal purple." (Lib. 3. p. 479.) And Oneas Sylvius gave the true reason, why it was the more common opinion, that the Pope

as above a council, viz. because Popes gave Bishoprics, but councils give none *.

Indeed, so rooted is the aversion of the Popes to the least degree of reformation, that many learned men in that communion have exposed themselves to the most severe danger by only hinting at it. To mention only F. Paul, Richer, De Marca†, Launoï, the author of *Moyens sûres et honnestes pour la Conversion des tous les Herétiques*, Cologne, 1681, Natalis Alexander, Dupin‡, Courayer, J. Febronius§, Scipio Ricci, &c.

The bad success of conferences between theologians of both parties, which has been often recommended as a proper means of closing our differences, has been clearly shewn by a Roman Bishop||: "Of all confe-

* *Bishop Stratford, Reformation Vindicated*, Preserv. Tit. I. p. 37.

† De Marca, although a strong assertor of the Bishop of Rome's supremacy, was kept out of his bishopric for many years by the Pope, merely for hinting at the Gallican liberties in his title. Offendit tamen (quis crederet,) hic liber Romana ingenia, nullam aliam ob causam, quam quod in fronte operis admoneret huic agi de libertatibus Ecclesiæ Gallicanæ. *Baluzii, de Vita P. De Marca*, 1663, p. 26.

‡ The works of this author, including his *Ecclesiastical History*, were prohibited, and ordered to be burned by Innocent XI. in 1684.

§ Febronius, or Jo. Nicholas ab Hontheim, Bishop of Myriofito, 1763. See *Dr Hales's Survey of the Modern State of the Church of Rome*, p. 154.

This author freely gives up the Council of Trent, and declares that, unless God doth inspire some great prince to do it, a reformation will come as soon by the devil as by the Pope. *De Statu Ecclesiæ*, Pref. Bullonii, 1763.

|| See also Archbishop Bramhall's remarks on the inutility of conferences, *Works*, p. 41. *Puller's Moderation of the Church of England*, p. 404. *Bennet on Schism*, p. 2.

rences (says Febronius, *De Stat. Eccl.* Pref.) the event was the same ; peace was not in the least promoted by such means. Therefore this method, which *so many experiments* have proved *fruitless*, has not been attempted in our age. The only path which appears to me left for our attaining this desired end is, that all discipline should be restored to that state in which it was before our adversaries, not without foundation, complained of the unjust yoke and excess of power. By the removal of these scandals, our religion will appear holy and lovely to all the believers of the gospel." We should think the time for *healing of schism* and *unity of the church* approaching (says Mr Leslie in answer to the Bishop of Meaux,) if the Bishops in the Roman communion would think themselves at liberty,—would be persuaded it was their duty, as answerable to God, to exert the full of their apostolic authority, each in his own diocese ; where, as St Cyprian says, (*Ep.* 59.) *judex vice Christi cogitatur*, he is to be esteemed as judge in the place of Christ. And (*Ep.* 68.) speaks of the Bishops in general, as *gubernandæ ecclesæ libram tenentes*, holding the balance of church government.

I am inclined to believe, that if your Lordship in particular, and other Bishops in the Gallican Church, were at liberty, each in his own district, to regulate such matters as you might do with a good conscience, things might be brought to bear so, from such a beginning of reformation, as that though men might differ in some particular opinions, as they always will, yet that terms of communion might be adjusted between us upon catholic principles, to the honour of God and peace of his church. And if such a commu-

pion were begun, though with but a few Bishops, who would exert their just power, it might in time bring the church to that state, in which all good men would wish to see her. And if a catholic communion were restored, we should see again the primitive face of the church.

But no step can be made towards this, while the Bishop of Rome's supremacy ties up the power of all other Bishops in their own respective churches. And we hardly expect, that he will give way to any thing that may in the least infringe the plenitude of his supremacy. You have made an experiment of it in your General Assembly of 1682. And if he will not suffer his supremacy to be limited and reduced to the standard of the ancient canons, we can see no remedy but that it must be taken away. Why should we have any hesitation to take that out of the way, which is *the visible remora to the uniting of all christian churches*, and the restoring of catholic communion all the world over? To take that out of the way, which your Bishops of France, as well as those of the Greek Church, and ours in England, &c. are fully convinced is an usurpation; against which you have so often struggled, and still do complain. But we have thrown it off, seeing no other way possible to get from under its usurpation. My Lord, I am satisfied that your church and ours are nearer to one another, as to this point of their supremacy, than you are with the church, at least the court, of Rome.

We see the peace of the world better consulted by the divine providence in many *independent kings*, than in *one universal monarch*; whose deputies, in far distant regions, could never be kept from revolts, as we

have seen in great monarchies, though none was ever yet universal. And, betwixt a king and his rebels, there is no interposing by his subjects ; it would justly render such suspected, who would argue on the rebels' side. Therefore, the end must be the extermination of the one or the other ; whereas, in disputes between kings, other kings may interpose their mediation, and become guarantees of peace. And yet the whole world is one kingdom to God ; as it is written (Psalm xvii. 28.) "*The kingdom is the Lord's, and he is the governor among the nations.*" How vain, then, would the dispute be between any of those nations, suppose France, Spain, or England, which of them were this one kingdom, when each of them, though greater than any other kingdom of the earth, would still be but a part of this one kingdom ? Such we esteem the dispute to be between particular churches : Which of them is the Catholic Church ? We must say, none of them ; though one be much greater and more potent than another, yet it is still but a part of the whole.

And as God has appointed no universal monarch, neither has he an *universal Bishop*. And all the arguments, which an universal Bishop could use for unity and peace, and to end controversies, might be used by an universal monarch, and both prove equally fallacious to the greater disturbance rather than settlement of that peace. But as our faith is dearer to us than our lives, so the mischief would be greater, if the whole church should be made to depend upon one ; for then *universa ecclesia corrui, si unus universus cadit*. And if the church falls, the faith which is built upon it, must fall with it. This obliged the

Bishops of Rome, when they set up for *universality*, to assert *infallibility* to themselves likewise ; because, indeed, less than that could not support so vast a charge, as that of the whole Catholic Church. But since their infallibility is fallen at least in France, we think it strange that their universality should survive it. An universality which never was yet in fact, never owned by the Catholic Church, or any churches out of the bounds of the Western empire ; nor intended, when first used in the western councils, to extend any farther.

How much safer has Christ consulted for his church than to put it all into the hands of one fallible man ? Idcirco copiosum fecit corpus sacerdotum, ut si unus lacerare et vastare tentaverit, cæteri subveniat, (Cyprian, *Ep.* 67.) as in the case of Paulo Samosatenus. Thus the peace of the world is preserved, and thus the peace of the church. And thus it is that God has disposed of both, whose foolishness is wiser than men.

It is not, to use the words of Mr Spinkes, the supremacy of your Bishop, nor the extent of his dominion, nor your arrogating to yourselves the name of the only catholics, nor any such outward mark or note, whereby your title to this claim can be made good. The only proper and sure way to judge of you aright, is that our Saviour prescribes for the discovery of false prophets, "*by their fruits ye shall know them.*" Whilst your corruptions both in Faith, Worship, and Government are so many and so foul, it is to no purpose to flatter yourselves with the name of Catholics. You may assume to yourselves as glorious titles as you please, but it is only by your faithful ad-

herence to the directions of the gospel, as understood in the primitive times, and all the best and purest ages of our religion, that you can ever truly entitle yourselves to them.—May God of his mercy to the christian world, send a double, a decuple portion of Marcellus the Second's reforming spirit upon his successors, and fill the conclave, as he did the house where the apostles met on the day of Pentecost, with his holy spirit, that Rome may again become a holy, catholic, and apostolic church indeed, and that all the churches of her communion be at last delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. *Hickes's Letters*, Vol. 1.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

No. I*.

By the RIGHT which (as I assert) belongs to the GOVERNORS of the CHURCH in MAKING CANONS, or laws for the behaviour of its members in spiritual affairs, and particularly in prescribing the particular circumstances of religious worship, I do not mean authority to *change* any of the *divine* laws; when any attempt of this kind is made, our rule is plain and express: "*We must obey God rather than men,*" (Acts v. 29.) Neither is it pretended, that they have power to impose any article of faith or rule of moral duty; or prescribe any condition of salvation, which is neither expressly contained in the scriptures, nor can be certainly concluded from them. For it is God's prerogative to declare in what manner he will be worshipped and obeyed, and upon what terms he will make us happy; and therefore the Papists, who are the only persons that claim this power, pretend at the same time to be infallibly guided by the Spirit of God. So that all that remains to be prescribed by the church relates only to external peace and order. And if it appear, that things of this nature are left *undetermined* in the scriptures, and also that it is *necessary* they should be determined, then we cannot doubt but that Christ has intrusted the church with

* See Dr Sherlock's excellent *Vindication of the Rights of Ecclesiastical Authority*, Lond. 1683. Clagett's *Reply to Alsop on the Misch. of Impositions*, 1681. *Answer to Delahunce's Plea*, by Mr Robertson, late a *Dissenting Teacher*, with a *Letter to Dan. Foe*, 1710; and *Hart's Ans. to Delaune*, 1717. Mr Law's *Second and Third Letter to the Bishop of Bangor*.

authority to determine them, otherwise its constitution would be defective, and such as could not answer the ends for which it was founded.

Now, that things of this nature are *not* particularly *determined* in scripture, is most evident: for the rules of scripture are all *general*; we are commanded to "*assemble together*" to worship God, but the times and places wherein we must assemble are not expressed. We are commanded to "*follow such things as make for peace and edification*," and to "*do all things decently and in order*," (Cor. xiv. 40.) "*for God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints*;" but the particular methods, whereby order must be maintained, and edification promoted, are no where set down. Timothy and all other Bishops with him, are commanded to "*lay hands suddenly on no man*;" but the previous trials of candidates for holy orders, and the time and method of inspection into their abilities and behaviour, are left undetermined. Neither is it possible, in things of this nature, to give particular rules which shall never require to be varied. For the same methods which at one time promote peace and edification, may, when the scene is changed, happen to obstruct these ends; and what in one age or country is decent, in another may be highly indecent. And therefore it is not diminishing the perfection of scripture to affirm, that they do not particularly determine things of this kind, which, being variable in their own nature, are not capable of any fixed determination.

Neither is it less certain, that it is *necessary* for things of this kind to be determined, than that the scripture has left them undetermined. For instance, the times and places where christians assemble together to worship God must be fixed, otherwise they cannot assemble at all. When they are assembled, it must be determined in what order the several offices of religion shall be performed, whether praying, or preaching, or singing of psalms, or administering the sacraments, shall be first; otherwise one will be for praying, whilst another is for preaching, and a third for some other office, and nothing but disorder and confusion will be seen in the church. On the same account, the division of christians into districts and parishes, for their more convenient assembling together, and preservation of order and discipline, is a thing which must be varied, and a more strict or gentle discipline of offenders must be proportioned to what the times will bear, and to what men will be brought to submit to (as God himself has set us an example in conniving at many things in the Jews, for the hardness of their hearts, as our blessed Saviour affirms.) These, I say are things

which must of necessity be varied, as times and circumstances change, and yet the variation of them may safely be left to the discretion of particular men. And the same will hold in other particular circumstances of public duties, which the scriptures have left undetermined. Either, then, every particular man is entirely left to his own *liberty*, as to all the circumstances of every part of God's worship, which must unavoidably produce disorder and confusion, and therefore "*decency and order*" cannot be maintained; or else there must be somewhere a *power* in the church to settle these circumstances, as shall be found necessary for the preservation of decency and regularity.

And if we inquire into the practice of the apostles, and other primitive governors of the church, we shall find that, besides the standing rules of the gospel, they prescribed various directions as the several occasions of the churches required, (1 Cor. xi. 16.—Ep. to Tim. and Titus.) And this authority has been transmitted through the several ages of the church to their successors, who are thereby authorized to make all such rules as should be requisite for the decent and orderly performance of divine worship. And, as the governors of the church ought not to impose any thing that is burthensome upon the people, however otherwise it may perhaps be lawful, so when they have made any rules concerning these matters, it is certainly the duty of the people, rather "*to obey*" and conform unto them, (Heb. xiii. 17.) than hazard the breach of the church's peace for things as are in their own nature indifferent, and consequently alterable whenever there appears just reason for it. We must consider (says Dr Sherlock, speaking of the power of the christian church in establishing the circumstances of worship,) the difference between the law and the gospel. Under the law, (Gal. iv. 1. 2.) the church was in an infant state, like an heir under age, which is under tutors and governors; and therefore every part of that temple worship was exactly framed according to the pattern in the mount. But the christian church is arrived to a full age, and set at liberty by Christ from the yoke of bondage, (Gal. vi. i.) and therefore is not under servile restraints, as the Jewish Church was, but has the government of its own actions, according to the general rules of the gospel.

In matters of this nature, all churches are at liberty to prescribe rites and ceremonies to its own members, provided they be consistent with the above-mentioned general precepts, laid down in scripture.—And this has been expressly declared by our Reformed Church. "It is not necessary that traditions and ceremonies be in all places like;

or at all times they have been diverse, and may be changed according to the diversities of countries, times, and manners," (Art. 34.)—"In these our doings, we condemn no other nations, nor prescribe any thing but to our own people only;" and thus Cyprian and the African Church acted, "Judging none, nor removing any from the right of communion, if they differ from us in some things." In those days, almost every church had *different rites and ceremonies*, and even *liturgies*, yet catholic communion was strictly preserved. "When I come to Rome (says Ambrose,) I fast on Saturday, when I am at Milan I do not fast; and so when thou goest to any church, observe its customs, if thou wouldst neither give just cause of offence, nor take offence without cause." And Austin lays down this general rule, "As to things in which the scripture defines nothing certain one way or the other, the custom of the church and the decrees of superiors are to be held for laws."

It is objected that, "for the same reason the church may impose some ceremonies, she may impose more; and who knows where the impositions may end. And that hence sprung that enormous mass of profane and foolish rites, which now grievously oppress both the Greek and the Romish churches." I answer, it is no argument against compliance in any particular case, that we cannot fix the bounds of it, any more than it is against the practice of any other christian virtue; for instance, it is hard to determine exactly what proportion of my estate I am obliged to bestow in alms, therefore I am not obliged to bestow any part of it; and, on this principle, subjects and servants may refuse obedience to the most harmless commands of their masters and princes. In truth, this is the dangerous fallacy of arguing against lawful power, from the abuse of it in those who are in possession of it; if those in whom power is vested will abuse it with insolent impositions (as the Papists do,) they must be answerable for it to their superiors on earth; or, if they be supreme, to the Great God in heaven. But our church has professed most solemnly against the multiplication of ceremonies, in the preface of the common prayer; and it is observable, that even at the restoration (1660,) when it was much more in the will and power of churchmen than ever it is likely to be again, there was not one single ceremony added to the church worship; which observation is sufficient to silence this mighty fear about ceremonies. But the true way of arguing against compliance is, to prove that the particular instances in which we are called to comply, are such as it is *unlawful* for a christian to comply with, either for their *number* or *quality*; and nothing

but this can take off our obligation to the great duty of compliance; and therefore the objection I am considering is of no force for that purpose.

It is objected again, that to require compliance to our peculiar forms of divine worship, is making new terms of communion which Christ never commanded, and therefore an encroachment on his authority. If this rule be pursued, and if we are not to comply with the *innocent* rites of particular churches, then we must refuse communion with all churches on earth. For, can a man be admitted to the communion even of Dissenters without submitting to their discipline and church administrations? Their communion is liable to the most terrible of those objections which have been urged with the greatest zeal against the church. For let us suppose that the major part of a congregation agree upon the use of a liturgy, organ, prayer before sermon, &c. is not this as plainly an encroachment on, and confinement of what Christ has made common to all, and does not this as effectually exclude the scrupulous from communicating in that congregation, in which they have as great a right as their neighbours, as what is complained of in the church? To say that the scrupulous may go to another congregation more to their mind, does not remove the present difficulty; for, according to these principles, they have a right to be admitted into this very congregation upon the naked terms of Christ himself. And why should they either put themselves to great inconveniences by hunting after other congregations more agreeable to them; or, by giving up their own right, encourage an imposing spirit, and ecclesiastical tyranny in those who have no authority for what they do? But, should their scruples be removed with respect to the lawfulness of the liturgy agreed upon, they are still obliged, by these principles, not to comply so far as to use constantly the form agreed on by others. For how do they know how many other impositions may be brought in at this rate? How can they answer the giving countenance to the least additions to Christ's institutions? Their compliance would be an acknowledgment of authority in the major part of the congregation to make such an agreement; and how could they acknowledge this without giving up all right in themselves to be admitted upon other terms? Shall they give up this right for the sake of *peace*?—No. Such compliance tends to slavery, and the encouragement of tyranny; and peace is not to be procured at so dear a price.

Thus might this cause be argued upon these principles, and the same objections brought against compliance with this scheme as has been

brought against compliance with the church ; and so a perpetual foundation laid of quarrels and animosities amongst neighbours. We must conclude then, that there cannot be any particular scheme invented, which will be wholly free from what are called unscriptural additions ; or that, until such a scheme be found, we may very well adhere to the church. But perhaps it may be replied, "since human institutions must be used in divine worship, they ought to be left to our liberty, to use them or not." But would not this introduce the utmost confusion into church assemblies, where some would be for using, and some for omitting, such rites and customs as others would think necessary ? And in what a ridiculous manner must the public service of God be everywhere performed, if every ignorant or conceited person were at liberty to break in upon the stated rules of divine worship, so contrary to the apostolic injunctions. For this reason, all churches in the world (and even the assemblies of those who use these objections,) have always taken upon them to determine their own rules of order and decency, and have exacted conformity to them of all the members of their own communion.

No. II*.

It has already been proved, that there were certain powers, exercised by Bishops in the primitive church, which were of *divine* institution, and never subject to any change or alteration. The principal of these powers (besides those which they had in common with Presbyters, as *preaching* and *administring the sacraments*,) were Ordination, Government (in which I include the inflicting of *ecclesiastical censures*,) and *Confirmation*. Besides these parts of their office which they exercised by *divine* appointment, there were others derived from the *customs* or *constitutions* of the church within herself, of which the principal were:—1. That they frequently met in *Synods* to consult concerning the common faith, and to agree upon measures for the preservation of peace and unity in their respective churches.—2. That every Bishop had the management of the public *revenue*, to distribute from thence the weekly and monthly portions to the clergy, and to relieve the poor and indigent part of “*the household of faith*,” and,—3. That they *appointed* to churches their particular Bishops and Pastors. Such was, as to its principal parts, the nature of the Episcopal and ministerial offices, as long as they continued without any support or countenance from the *civil* power: But afterwards (about the year A. D. 325.) when the Roman Emperors became christians, there was formed throughout the Empire a *coalition* or *union* between the *spiritual* and *temporal* states; and this union seems plainly to have been formed on these foundations:—1. That all *powers* exercised by Bishops and other officers of the church, by virtue of divine institution, were in their full

* See Dr Brett's *Independency of the Church on the State*, Lond. 1717. *The Independency of the Church not Romish, but Primitive*, &c. 1716. *Leslie's Case of the Regale and Pontificate*; an excellent treatise on this subject, and which may be read as an antidote against certain strange tenets advanced in *Dr Wake's Book on the Regal Supremacy*, *Bishop Warburton's Alliance*, &c. The late Mr Jones with great reason expressed his surprise at “the sublime praises bestowed by Bishop Hurd on the *Alliance*, and other works of that fanciful but very ingenious projector of *unfounded theories*,” and was persuaded that “neither religion or learning will ever derive much benefit, nor the christian world any considerable edification from the works of that writer.” *Life of Bishop Horne* 1799. p. 44. *Gray's Bampton Lectures*, 1796. p. 100.

extent to be continued to them.—2. That all other matters, which were not fixed by a *divine* law, but were necessary for the maintenance of good order and government, were to be settled by the *direction* and *approbation* of the *civil* power. That the interference of the civil power in church affairs is not unlawful, we have authority from the holy scriptures. In the Old Testament, the kings of Israel and Judah exercised, in things *circumstantial*, an orderly controul over the Priesthood for the good of the church. And of the christian church it was prophesied, (Isai. lix. 23.) that "*kings should be its nursing fathers and queens its nursing mothers;*" and that they "*should bow down to it with their face towards the earth,*" i. e. that kings and queens should protect and defend the church from all outward injury and violence; and should bow down before the guides and governors of it, to receive the word and sacraments at their hands. Moreover, that "*the kingdoms of this world should become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ: and he shall reign for ever and ever,*" (Rev. xi. 15.) and that "*the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls; and their kings shall minister unto thee.*" (Isai. lix. 10. 16. 11. 12.)

In this manner, a friendly union was formed between the spiritual and temporal powers in most christian states, and was tolerably well preserved till the time of the papal usurpation. However (says Dr Brett,) the Pope, the grand corrupter of christianity, taking upon him, under pretence of maintaining the independence of the church, to exempt some causes and persons from all civil jurisdiction to the princes, gave the princes a just occasion to reject this usurped power. And at the Reformation divers princes and states, and ours among the rest, not able to bear these usurpations and encroachments, found it necessary to shake off the papal yoke; and because the Pope had strained the matter too high on the church's side, this made our princes judge it necessary, to secure themselves from those invasions, and might have carried them (in establishing our Reformed Church,) a little too far into the opposite extreme, of raising the *civil* power too high.

For at the beginning of the Reformation in Great Britain, a new and before unheard-of title was invented for the civil magistrate, that of *Supreme Head in earth of the Church of England*, which Henry VIII. forced all persons by his acts of Parliament, under the severest penalties to acknowledge was due to him. But indeed, if the king had a just right to this title, it might imply that the church cannot be in any respect independent of him. For if he be *the only Supreme Head in earth of the Church of England*, as the statute (but God be praised

it is a statute long since repealed,) declares him to be, then all *spiritual* as well as *temporal power* must be derived from him, and he may commit it to whom, and in what manner he pleases; and in this sense so plainly contrary to the holy scriptures, Archbishop Cranmer about that time understood it.

Having assumed this strange title, Henry thought proper to exercise it in its fullest extent; and accordingly he made the Bishops (Cranmer, Bonner, &c.) take out "a *strange* commission (as Bishop Burnett himself styles it,) which might give just occasion to call them the King's Bishops." By this commission it appears, that the king looked upon himself to have full authority, by virtue of his *Supreme Headship*, to ordain Bishops, Priests, or Deacons; nay, that even the Lord Cromwell, his vicegerent, might have done it. But after all, it appears from this very commission, that Henry himself was not satisfied that he *really* possessed all that power which here he pretends to; for he found it necessary to throw the following reserve into the commission (as Mr Collier observes,) "over and above those things which are known from the holy scriptures to have been committed to you (the Bishop,) by God;" which words effectually overthrow that boundless supremacy pretended to in other parts of the commission. And moreover, it farther appears that even this *supreme head of the church*, never attempted to make Bishops, or think himself capable of making them without their assistance, notwithstanding Cranmer's opinion, that the ceremony of imposition of Episcopal hands was unnecessary*.

This title was repealed by Queen Mary, and never since revived. For Queen Elizabeth contented herself with the title of "supreme governor of this realm, &c. as well in all spiritual or ecclesiastical things as temporal:" and allowed that it should be declared in the articles (Art. 37.) published by her authority, that we give not to our princes the ministring either of God's word or of the sacraments; but that only prerogative, which we find to have been given always to all godly princes in holy scriptures by God himself, that is, that they should rule all states and degrees committed to their charge by God, whether they be ecclesiastical or temporal, and restrain with the *civil sword* the stubborn and evil doers."

Since then (says Dr Brett,) that title of supreme head of the church was repealed by act of Parliament, and *never since restored*, or

* See Dr Gray's *Bapt. Lect. Sermon* p. 70.—Cranmer, it must be soon after relinquished these Erastian sentiments.

part of the regal title; that it is also a title never known or heard of till that age, and liable to very strange constructions. I have often wondered, how so many learned men have to this day *continued* to give this title to our princes; and I am persuaded, that nothing has more contributed to the spreading of Erastianism, than this unwary custom of styling our king *supreme head of* the church, which I am assured has no law or canon now in force to oblige us; and I am well satisfied has neither *reason, religion, nor gospel* to induce us to use it*.

This, (says Bishop Burnet, speaking of the 37th article) is all that supremacy we are bound in conscience to own; and if the letter of the law, or the stretches of that in the administration of it, have carried this further, we are not at all concerned in it: but in case any such thing were made out, it could amount to no more than this, that the civil power had made some encroachments on ecclesiastical authority. But the submitting to an *oppression*, and the bearing it till some *better times* may deliver us from it, is no argument against our church; on the contrary, it is a proof of our temper and patience, and of that respect we pay to that civil authority God hath set over us, even when we think it *passeth its bounds*.

In consequence of the alliance of the church with the civil power, which has taken place with respect to the Reformed Episcopal Church in *England and Ireland* (for the Episcopal church in Scotland is perfectly free and independent in spiritual affairs, as the primitive churches were,) the state has adopted them as a part of the constitution, has engaged to support and defend them from all external injury and violence, has made a provision for their Bishops and clergy, and has assisted their spiritual administrations with secular effects and censures. In return for these privileges, the church has conceded to the state some of its privileges which are not purely spiritual, as the nomination of Bishops; that synods shall not be called, nor their rules considered as binding until approved by the king; that there shall be no

* "A title first introduced by Papists, and laid aside by Protestants, because it seemed to intrench too much upon the just right of our Saviour, and, being subject to be misunderstood, gave offence to many well affected christians."

Bramhall's Works, p. 63.—Where (says Bishop Jewel,) is the Queen called the Supreme Head? No, no, brethren, she refuseth it, she will not have it, nor be so called." *View of a Seditious Bull*, *Works*, p. 14.

† (says Bishop Bramhall,) did never style himself Head of the church, but with patience endure to bear that title." *Works*, p. 26.27.

‡ *Ref. III, Records*, No. 48. *Leslie's Works*, I. p. 624.

admission or refusal of clerks to parishes, or exercise of discipline, but in consistence with, and under the regulations of the laws of the land, and the like*.

But it must be carefully recollected, that the church, in being supported by the state, does not lose its inherent spiritual nature and

* The nature of my subject requires me to make a few remarks on the Maintenance of the Clergy.—It is admitted on all hands, that they who devote their time, should receive a maintenance from those whom they instruct. (1 Cor. ix. 14.—Gal. vi. 6.) These contributions were at first raised by *voluntary* subscription from *their own* people; consequently, they were in a great measure proportioned to that degree of zeal and attention, which the clergy exerted towards them. Thus was the great body of the clergy maintained for above 300 years, and so comfortably, that St Austin and St Chrysostom assert, that they were never better provided for, than when their maintenance was raised chiefly from the people. *Bingham's Antiq.* Book V. c. iv. sect. 15.

The clergy in England and Ireland are maintained by the legislature, so are also the Presbyterian preachers in Ireland; and, in some respects, they have the advantage over the clergy. "Their support is given *unlogged* by any conditions, which can in the least degree abridge them in the exercise of their ecclesiastical power; and Government does not, in the *smallest* degree, either *directly* or *indirectly* interfere with, or *restrain* them in the exercise of their discipline. And moreover, all their ecclesiastical ministrations and judicial decisions are *as fully legalised*, as if they were a part of the ecclesiastical establishment of the country. *M'Dowel's Presb. Gov.* 1808. pref.—The maintenance of the clergy consists of tythes, which are raised not only from their own people, but also from *Dissenters of all descriptions*. This method of providing for the clergy may have its advantages, but I am firmly persuaded, that no circumstance has contributed more to retard the conversion of Dissenters, and the progress of reformed religion.

The *Regium Donum* of the Dissenting teachers is, I acknowledge, equally raised from the property of all sects and classes of the community; but we hear no complaints against them, because they are not themselves obliged to collect it, but are cheerfully paid from the treasury of the nation. But, for what reason the clergy (who have conceded so many of their valuable privileges to the state,) should be placed under the disagreeable necessity of collecting their maintenance in such an extremely offensive manner, I have not yet been able to discover. It has been said, indeed, that "if the clergy depended on the treasury for support, they might be deprived of it altogether, if ever the legislature became averse to them and their principles." But may not the legislature vote alienation of, and deprive them of the tythes also? Are not tythes the gift of the state, and what the state has *given*, surely it may *take* away. In the mean time, it remains (says Mr Gisborne,) the duty of every clergyman to endeavour to obviate the evils attending that which now subsists, until some *more eligible* method of supporting the clergy is devised and adopted by the legislature. *Enquiry into the Duties of Men*, II. p. 67. 1800. And if the

authority. It continues the same church still. It subsisted upon its own bottom, upon the law of its own discipline, antecedently to the civil laws, and stands upon its own intrinsic power and authority, whether in or without the state. Its Bishops do not cease to be Bishops, nor its sacraments to be sacraments because the state admits of them, and establishes them. Suppose the state were to declare against all these things, as the Heathens and Jews did in the first ages of the Gospel, their declaration would signify nothing; because the church in its priesthood and sacraments derives its authority only from Jesus Christ, which the persecution of the civil-powers cannot reach, much less can their allowance turn it into an human authority, and render it of none effect.

It is a very false suggestion, that in consequence of this alliance the state can alter the church at its pleasure. The legislature, I acknowledge, is competent to withdraw from that portion of the church of Christ which is at present established in England and Ireland, the legal privileges which she derives from the state, and might adopt the principles of the French Convention, and abolish the *establishment* of Christianity under every form; but no legislature has a *right*, and no *christian* legislature will *pretend* to a right to change that constitution, whatever it be, which the church received from her divine founder.

But let us suppose that the legislature should attempt to introduce essential innovations into the religion of the church, it may be enquired what is to be done in such a case? The clergy and people, who refuse to comply with such alterations, must then throw up those revenues and privileges which they have so long enjoyed, and suffer

clergy think it of consequence not to lose the favour of the legislature, the following advice of the great Archbishop Secker ought to be strictly attended to: "Temporal things are not to be neglected,—and, least of all, those which are set apart for things eternal. But then we must be watchful over them, in order to employ them as they were *meant* to be employed; and if we preserve and transmit them ever so faithfully, but use them *unfaithfully*, studying only or chiefly to *enrich* or *advance* ourselves, or gratify our sensual *appetites*, or love of *diversions*, or of *elegant appearance*, by means of those *revenues*, which were given us for ends *widely different* (partly to make a *comfortable* and moderate, not a superfluous and invidious provision for ourselves and ours, and partly to serve the purposes of religion and charity,) we offend God, sin against our brethren, and *provoke* men to *take from us*, what they are too ready to say we do no good with; as indeed little would be done were such a conduct general."—*Charges*, p. 159. 1771.

martyrdom, rather than submit to depart a tittle from "*the faith once delivered to the saints*." We ought to be thankful (says the apostolic Bishop Wilson,) for the favours we have received from religious princes; but if our benefactors require of us what is inconsistent with our trust, *we know whom we are to obey*. Should we ever be so unhappy (says Archbishop Wake,) as to be *denied* all liberty of convocations, though the governors and fathers of the church should with all their care and interest endeavour to obtain it; should the prince so far abuse his prerogative, as to turn it not only to the detriment, but to the ruin of all true religion among us, and thereby make it absolutely necessary for something extraordinary to be done to preserve both: In such a case of extremity (I have before said, and still adhere to it,) the Bishops and Pastors of the church, must resolve to hazard all in the discharge of their duty, they must meet, consult, and resolve on such measures, as, by God's assistance, they shall think their unhappy circumstances to require, and be content to suffer any loss, or run into any danger for so doing.

It is not my intention at present, to discuss the advantages or disadvantages attendant on the establishment of religion by the state. However I beg leave to desire the reader carefully to recollect that a political establishment is by no means *essential* to the *preservation* of a church*. Whether (as Archdeacon Daubeny observes,) the politi-

* This I do the more willingly *at present*, in order to quiet the unreasonable fears of those who imagine, that the extirpation of the church and religion must necessarily attend the overthrow of the establishment, which some of our most zealous writers have declared to be in some danger. The effect to be expected from the alarming separation from our church (says Archdeacon Daubeny,) should it be carried to that extent which *present appearances* almost justify us in apprehending must be the ultimate destruction of the Establishment. For should the time ever arrive, which God forbid, when the number of christians without the walls of the church should exceed, in any degree, that of those assembled within them (the ground of public opinion on which every establishment *as such* stands, being withdrawn,) I see nothing that can prevent its falling to the ground. The present subject has been introduced, not with a view to alarm, so much as to *forewarn*. *Charge*, p. 14. 1805. And (to make use of another remark of the same writer,) if, in consequence of the unsettled notions, which now prevail upon religious subjects, christians are continually dropping from the Church, let it be for any cause rather than on account of the *irregularity, incapacity* or *want of zeal* in its ministers. *Guide to the Church*, p. 445.

The *single end* we ought to propose by church establishment (says Dr Paley,) is the preservation and communication of religious knowledge. Every other

cal establishment of the church stand or fall, the church itself, so long as God shall think fit to preserve it in any country, will remain as to its constitution, what it originally was, *firm* on its own divine foundation.

After such strong assertions of this excellent writer in defence of the *independent* power of the church, is it not very surprizing that he should contradict himself within the compass of the same volume, in asserting, that "the preservation of the establishment is *essential* to the continuance of the church in this country; it being the best security against that babel of religious confusion and infidelity, which would be the ultimate effect of its destruction," (*Guide*. p. 537.) In my opinion there could not be a stronger satire on our religion and the clergy, than to say that they *essentially require* the aid of the civil power. May not the Dissenters, on hearing such assertions, exclaim with the greatest justice, "The Church of Christ is built upon a rock, and we are assured that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Had your church been built upon this rock of truth, it would have had nothing to fear. Its own evidence and excellence would have supported it," *Priestly's Letter to Burke*, p. 98. It is equally absurd to imagine that establishments are the best security against confusion and infidelity. For did establishments ever prevent schisms, and infidelity?—No. Look at the condition of our own country even at present, and we shall soon perceive that this notion is contrary to plain matter of fact; and *I must agree* with a late clergyman in the truth of the following remarks:—The Dissenters have been frowned on from the Restoration to the present time, and yet they and the Methodists, who are in the same predicament, are *much more on the increase* than we of the *Establishment*, who are *fostered* by the government, attended by the *nobles* and *gentry* of the land, and *supported* by the *state*, at the expence of near *two millions* a year. *Simpson's Plea*.

Similar to this assertion of Mr Daubeny is that of Mr Milner, author of an *Eccl. Hist.* in 5 vols. 1803, who supposes that "without a state establishment there would be no religion among us." But did not the Church of Christ from the beginning subsist without it? Does not the Reformed Church in America and Scotland subsist without it, or

idea, and every other end that has been mixed with this, as the making the Church an engine or even an ally to the state,—converting it into the means of strengthening or of diffusing influence,—or of regarding it as a support of regal, in opposition to popular forms of government, have served only to debase the institution, and to introduce into it numerous corruptions and abuses.—*Moral and Political Philosophy*, Vol. II. p. 305.

is there less religion with them, than among us?—No, on the contrary, one of the most spiritual Bishops England ever had to boast of, declared that from the present circumstances of the primitive orthodoxy, piety, poverty, and depressed state of the Episcopal (*unestablished*) Church in Scotland, he was of opinion that, if St Paul were upon earth, and it were put to his choice with what denomination of christians he would communicate, the preference would probably be given to the Episcopalians in Scotland, as most like to the people he had been used to. Jones's *Life of Bishop Horne*, p. 153.

Should it happen, that Episcopacy in England and Ireland were deprived of all that support, which it now enjoys from the temporal power; were its ministers even spoiled of their proper revenues; were they ejected from national councils, and rendered in their *external* condition contemptible and destitute; its claims to authority in the Church of Christ would nevertheless continue exactly the same, as they are at present. Should that time ever arrive, then the piety, the zeal, the constancy, with which the Episcopal clergy would adhere to the afflicted church would prove, that their attachment to it in the hour of prosperity proceeded solely from the conviction, that this form of ministry, whether persecuted, or whether exalted, is truly that which was appointed by their blessed Lord*.

* *Nott's Bampton Lectures*, 1802, p. 107.—It has been asserted, that “in such extremity, no person will be a candidate for the ministry, but those who have not been liberally educated, or those in the lower classes of life.” But this goes on the idea, that no one will officiate in a christian church, but for the sake of *temporal emolument* which he receives from it, which is a most unjust and ill-founded reflection on christianity and the ministers of it. It is an equally injurious reflection to say, that “*wealth and temporal honours* are necessary to render the clergy respectable.” Some indeed (says Dr South,) may please and promise themselves high matters from full revenues, stately palaces, court interests, and great dependencies; but that which makes the clergy glorious, is to be *knowing* in their *profession*, *unspotted* in their *lives*, *active* and *laborious* in their *charges*, *bold* and *resolute* in opposing *seducers*, and *daring* to look vice in the face, though never so *potent* and *illustrious*, and lastly, to be *gentle*, *courteous*, and *compassionate* to all. These are our robes and our maces, our escutcheons and highest titles of honour; for by these things God is honoured, who has declared this to be the external rule and standard of all honour derivable upon men, “that those who honour him shall be honoured by him.” *Sermon on the Duties of the Episcopal Function*. There is a remarkable fact in confirmation of this in *Kettlewell's Works*, Vol. I. p. 61. pref. O'Connor's *Columbanus*, *Third Letter*, p. 37. See also an Account of the Church Establishment in Sweden, in *Leslie's Works*, I. p. 612.

To conclude with the late pious Mr Jones : "To any particular or national church, all temporal alliances are but momentary considerations, which pass away with the fashion of the world ; and the church may be either *with them*, or *without them*, as it was in the first ages ; for the church itself, under the relation it bears to Jesus Christ, abideth for ever. . *Essay on the Church*, Pref.

No. III.

"*Si quis nullam in Ecclesia disciplinam conservet, et omnibus tantum inservit de Episcopatus vigore actum est.*"—Goulartii Notæ in Cyprian. Epist. 55.

It cannot be denied, that in the primitive church those who were convicted of notorious crimes were excommunicated, and expelled from the communion of the faithful, and not restored until they had exhibited the clearest proofs of repentance. This power of excluding offenders from communion, was committed by our Lord to his apostles and their successors only, (See Matt. xvi. 19. xviii. 15. to 20.—John xx. 21. 22.—1 Cor. v.—2 Thess. iii. 6. 14.—2 John x. 11.—1 Tim. v. 19.—Tit. iii. 10.) And in the age succeeding the apostles, there are many convincing proofs that the same method of excluding offenders was constantly kept up as a thing of divine institution. See Bishop Potter, *on Church Government*, p. 367.

Expulsion from church communion did not consist merely in exclusion from the eucharist, but also from the public prayers of the church; for those who are unfit to receive the former, are also unfit to partake in the latter, (Prov. xv. 8.—Psalm lxvi. 18.) See *Kettlewell's Works*, I. p. 371. *Sherlock on Relig. Assemblies*, last chap. It is well known, as Bishop Andrews remarks, that all the time of the Primitive church, the *sermon* was ever done before the *service* began. To the sermon, heathens, infidels, jews, heretics, schismatics, in short, all sorts of people were admitted; but when the liturgy began all these were excluded, not one of them suffered to stay. See *Daubeny's Guide*, p. 203.

The ends for which this discipline was instituted, were, according to Bishop Potter,—1. For the honour of God and his church. (1 Pet. II. 9. Eph. v. 25, 27. Rom. ii. 24.—2 Sam. xii. 14.) It is manifest, says he, that the church's reputation was never so great in the world, as in the primitive ages, when discipline was exercised with *severity* and *rigour*. Then her professed enemies admired her, great number of proselytes daily flocked into her, and could not be restrained by the utmost torments, which human or devilish malice could inflict: Whereas since the primitive discipline has been laid aside, and christians have lived like the rest of the world, though the church has been pro-

ted by the civil power, and flourished with far more outward splendour than before, fewer converts have been brought over to her, and too many of her own sons and members have lost their *first zeal* and love for her.—2. Another end of this discipline, was to reform offenders, (2 Cor. x. 8. xiii. 10.—1 Cor. v. 8.—Act. v. 11.—2 Thess. iii. 14. 15.) And it is a *great charity*, (continues the Bishop) to deprive them of the sacraments, because they are not qualified to receive them. For though it be a very great sin to neglect them, yet it is a much higher affront to God to receive them with an unbelieving heart, than not to receive them at all.—3. It is a means to preserve the rest of the church from being corrupted. 1 Cor. v. 6. 7.—2 Tim. ii. 16. 17. 18.

Such were the benefits arising from the exercise of this holy discipline in the primitive church. With us both are equally neglected and unknown. Once a year (see the office of Communion,) says Dr Marshall, we solemnly profess our wishes to have it restored, but if something farther be not contributed to its restoration, than our annual wishes, it will lie where it does, disregarded by all, and utterly unknown to the thoughtless many, (*Penit. Discipline of the Primitive Church*, Lond. 1714.) There is one thing (says Bishop Burnet,) yet wanting, to complete the reformation of the church, which is to restore primitive discipline against scandalous persons, the establishing the government of the church in ecclesiastical hands, and taking it out of lay hands who have so long profaned it, and have exposed the authority of the church, and the censures of it, chiefly excommunication, to the contempt of the nation; so that the dreadfulest of all censures is now become the most scorned and despised, (*Hist. Reformation, abridged*, p. 367, and *Pastoral Care, passim.*) *Disciplinam Ecclesiæ, superiore seculo, collapsam, nostro pene obrutam lugemus omnes*, (Episc. Gibson, *Concio ad Synod*, 1714. Leslie's *Works*, I. p. 594. Bingham's *Antiq.* Book XV. c. 9. sect. 8. Reynold's *on the Government of the Church of England*, Lond. 1743, p. 149. Hickes's *Two Treatises*, Pref. 82. Bishop Latimer's *Sermons* *.

* The venerable Bishop Wilson was one of the most strenuous assertors of discipline in modern times. See his *Works* in two vols. 4to. with his *Life* prefixed. See also some extraordinary observations on this head in William Whiston's *Address to the Princes, &c. of Europe, for the Toleration of the Christian Religion* Lond. 1716. Hammond, *Of the Power of the Keys*. Sir George Wheeler's *Account of the Churches of the Primitive Christians*, Lond. 1689, where he shews "with what ease this order might be accommodated to our church," p. 109.—Although discipline is of the greatest importance to the edification of the church,

There are several prevailing objections against the restoration of it, which I shall here take notice of.

1. It is represented to be, in the present age, *impracticable*.—To answer in the words of the late apostolic Bishop Wilson: This cannot be, when it was practised for so many years in the primitive church. And what if it be one of those things which Christ has commanded his followers to observe so strictly, (Matt. xxviii, 19. 20.) The commands of Christ cannot be impracticable, that would be to tax him with ignorance or weakness. When he promised to be with his church to the end of the world, he engaged to give such graces as were necessary to raise us above our natural weaknesses.—*Sacra Privata*.

2. The unfavourableness of the times has also been urged. This has been the common objection *ever since* the Reformation. I agree with you (says Mr White to his adversary,) that the discipline of the church is of great moment towards the edification of its members; and that the fault is unpardonable, when church governors let it fall through a supine carelessness and neglect. And I may presume to say that they will be obliged to lay hold of every favourable juncture, and

yet it cannot be said to be essential to its existence: and it is very unlawful and schismatical to separate on account of the neglect of it. The clergy in the church at Corinth were very remiss in the exercise of it, yet the apostle gives not the least countenance to the laity to withdraw from communion, on that account, but, on the contrary, exhorts them to unity in the most forcible manner, (1 Cor. v. 2. iii. 3. xii. 20. 25.—Rev. ii. 15. 20.) In such cases, the governors of the church must answer to God for the neglect of their authority, (Rev. ii. 14. 15. 16. 20.) and sinners for the scandals they commit; but the consciences of the faithful cannot be defiled, as long as they do not encourage nor imitate them. (Gal. vi. 4. 5.) *Kettlewell's Works*, I. 458.

It would be folly in the extreme, to think of restoring discipline as long as the opinion prevails among any of the members of the church, that salvation may be had in *any* communion. So Mr M'Dowel: It is not to be expected that discipline can be retrieved, till these opinions be retrieved, and as universally be received by every individual member of our church, as they were in the primitive ages: viz. that the orthodox communion alone was that which was entitled to have its church-acts ratified in heaven, and that all other communions divided from her were for that presumed to be divided from the heavenly communion, and therefore from God. *On Occasional Communion*, Lond. 1705. p. 8. 10. See his *Address to the Bishops*, p. 206.

I hope (says Dr Trapp,) we may have leave to wish that the foreign Presbyterians were Episcopal; that they were in this respect "*altogether such as we are*;" I might add, with too much reason, "*except these bonds*;" I mean the restraints by which our discipline is shackled and fettered, and hindered from exerting itself to the salvation of souls. *Discourses*, Vol. 2. p. 116. 1722.

watch all opportunities to do their duty, and not to make the badness of the times a *prelence* for their neglect, when perhaps *indolence*, *pusillanimity*, or *worldly wisdom*, are at the bottom of it. *Third Letter*, Lond. 1745.

3. But the grand objection against the exercise of discipline (and which will be urged as long as the present establishment subsists,) is the *pretended* danger of arming the Bishops with any power. A wonderful dread respecting this *danger*, was lately affected in the debates on the Residence Bill. "But who, in the name of common sense (exclaims a zealous Presbyterian of the Church of England,) ought to have power over the officers of any institution, but they who are thought fit to preside, and to whom alone Christ has bestowed it. At present the power of the Bishops is so very limited, "that a profligate Priest may still *bid defiance* to the remonstrances and menaces of his diocesan," (Thomas's *Strictures on the Established Religion, and Clergy*, 1809. p. 118.) And (as the late Mr Skelton some time since remarked,) so very low hath the opinion of a Bishop's authority been brought, that, in our times, the late Bishop of Sodor and Man (Dr Wilson,) was thrown into a dungeon, where he was very nigh perishing, for refusing the sacrament to the strumpet of a sorry deputy, (*Sermons*, p. 314.) Taking these remarks into consideration, it ought not to appear surprising that a bill has been lately projected to extinguish the little authority still in the possession of our church governors. It is intended to "preclude *ecclesiastics* from presiding in consistorial courts, and to *prohibit* the usual sentence of *excommunication*." The list of privations (say the editors of the *British Critic* in their review of *Observations* on the above bill, April 1813. p. 413,) to which the clergy have *gradually* been rendered subject, without any *fault* alleged against them, is *really formidable*; and they are *stated*, as the author says, "not with the sanguine *hope* that any of them will be *redressed*, but with a design to show that the clergy are already depressed low enough, and to give a caution against sinking them lower."

To what length the legislature will proceed in its invasions on the rights of the church, it is impossible to foresee; however it is obvious, that our Bishops and clergy cannot acquiesce in them *much farther*, without becoming betrayers of their sacred commission which they are bound by the law of God, to maintain even to death. An united resolution among the superior clergy, or the greatest part of them (says that zealous divine, Dr Hicke,) impartially to execute the discipline of the church, would, with a little patience and perseverance,

recover the just exercise of it; and discipline being as necessary for the church as any other society, I think it not only their duty to suffer persecution in the attempt, but that it would be no less than martyrdom to suffer in it to blood. A church without discipline, or ill-exercised discipline, little better than none, cannot please God.—*Three Treatises*, Pref. Lond. 1709.

However, it is to be hoped that it will never *again* be necessary to recur to the expedient, of an open opposition to the decisions of the legislature. It is to be hoped that the legislature will not refuse its consent to a meeting of the convocation, should our Bishops be pleased humbly to make this request. It was the opinion of the learned Archdeacon Reynolds, that “a seasonable execution of *synodical* power must be the only way to raise the reputation, and prevent the *total* extinction of ecclesiastical authority.” (*Reynolds*, ut supra, p. 236.) See also the anxious wish of the late Dr Pearson Vice Chancellor of Cambridge, relative to the sitting of convocation, in his *Remarks on the dangers which threaten the Established Religion*, 1808. p. 53. I think it scarcely possible, says he, that in the present state of things, the sitting of convocation could be productive of any harm; and it is reasonable to suppose that it would be productive of *much good* *.—

* Many useful hints may be found in this pamphlet relative to the improving of our discipline and forms of worship. I pray the adversaries of reform to consider, (says Dr Hickes, that as the church doth not think herself infallible; so neither doth she think herself or her reformation, perfect; *Account of Dr Grabe*, Lond. 1712. p. 26. *Dean Prideaux's Life*, Lond. 1748. p. 59. A moderate review of the liturgy, the authorising a brief service for week days, and the instruction of candidates in reading and delivery are recommended by Dr Pearson. Would it not be expedient to contract the *length* of the sunday service, especially by omitting so *frequent a repetition* of the Lord's prayer and the prayers for king and royal family? I have never seen a sufficient answer to this objection. I must agree with Mr Simeon of King's College Cambrige, that it is still matter of regret that any *laboured* explanation of certain objections (as the Athanasian Creed, the absolution in Visitation of Sick, and the prayers in Burial of Dead) should be necessary. *Excell. of Liturgy*, Camb. 1812. p. 77. It is evident, says Bishop Gibson, that we must not hope to see either the discipline or the government of our church in a complete state, as long as the several districts to be visited, remain in many instances so unreasonably large. *Of Visitations*, Lond. 1717. Dr Hickes also recommends an increase of Bishops *without Baronies*. See the Preface to the Common Prayer used in the American Reformed Episcopal Church since the Revolution. It is not only the doctrine of the Church of England, and other Protestant Churches (say the writers of the Preface,) that improvements may be made in these respects, but likewise

The absolute necessity of it is strongly enforced by Mr Thomas in the Second Preface to the 2d edit. of his *Strictures*, Lond. 1809. This however, says he, may be said without much presumption, unless the powers with which the church as a *body corporate* is endowed, shall not only be allowed to exist, but to act; and if some definitive line be not drawn, which shall discriminate between *endurance* and *encouragement*,—though the parliament should debate on twenty more bills about non-residence and stipendiary curates,—though every incumbent should be compelled to reside,—and though the salary of every curate should exceed the revenue of three-fourths of the benefices in the kingdom, the current of mischief and confusion will go on. Its termination requires no prophecy.

Having now, I hope, clearly shewn the necessity of restoring the primitive discipline of the church, and the synodical rights of the clergy, I shall dedicate a few pages to the consideration of the fittest and most judicious means to be employed in improving the condition of the church, preserving the respect due to the clergy and preventing heresies and schisms. The following extract from the celebrated Dr Hammond appears fully deserving of our attention: “That the restoring Episcopacy to its due *burthen*, as well as *reputation*, were a care worthy of Reformers; and it is so far from my desire that any such care should be spared, that it is now my *public solemn petition both to God and man*, that the power of the keys, and the exercise of that power, the due use of confirmation, and (previous to that) *examination* and *trial* of youth, a *strict search* into the manners, and tempers, and sufficiencies of those who are to be admitted into holy orders, the visitation of *each parish* in each diocese, and the exercise of church discipline upon *all offenders*, together with painful, mature, and sober preaching and catechising, studies of all kinds, and parts of theological learning, languages, controversies, writings of the schools and casuists, &c. be so far taken into consideration by our law makers, and so far *considered* in the collating of church preferments, so much of duty required of every clergyman, and so little left *arbitrary* or *at large*, that every church preferment in the kingdom may have such a due burthen annexed to it, that no *ignorant* person should be *able*, no *lazy* or *luxu-*

of the Church of Rome, which hath declared it by the Council of Trent (Sess. XXI. c. 2.) And agreeably to this, their Breviary and Missal have been frequently reviewed, the Breviary heretofore three times in the space of sixteen years only.

rious person *willing or forward* to undergo it."—*Considerations, &c. Works* Vol. 1.

The following according to the same learned divine, (who was an attentive observer of those times,) were the principal causes which contributed to the contempt of the Episcopal clergy, and the downfall of their establishment in the reign of Charles I. The admission of some men to the ministry, who were *not duly qualified* for it; the *negligent* and *unworthy* performance of the offices of so sacred a function, and the many *profane* mixtures, the seeking our own *wealth*, and *ease*, and *praise*, &c. qualified us for that *contempt* and *ruin*, which are now fallen upon us. (*Parænesis. Works*, Vol. I.) Nothing contributed more to the introduction of the corruptions, &c. of Popery in the middle ages than the *ignorant* and *unqualified* Bishops who were appointed solely to serve the base designs of the court. If any clergyman (says an excellent writer) had any dependance on the prince, or some great minister of state, so that he could do them service in their political schemes and temporal affairs, this certainly advanced him to a good bishopric, without considering whether he was in any degree qualified for so sacred and important an office. So that learning, piety, virtue, and diligence in performing the duties of their holy function, seldom recommended any one to preferment. From whence sprung in a great measure, that ignorance, barbarism, and other strange corruptions under which the church so long groaned before the Reformation.—*The Contempt of the Clergy Considered*. Dub. 1739.

Among all the ways of *promoting the credit and interest of the church* (says Bishop Stillingfleet,) one of the most successful will be the diligent labours, and the exemplary lives of the clergy. We may complain as long as we please of the unreasonableness of the contempt of the clergy in our days, but the most effectual means to prevent or remove it, is for the clergy to apply themselves seriously and conscientiously in their duties. For if others find that we are in earnest, and make it our great business to do all the good we can, both in the pulpit and out of it, if we behave ourselves with gravity, sobriety, meekness, and charity which becomes so holy a profession, we shall raise ourselves above the common reproaches of a spiteful world, and do what lies in us to stop the mouths at least, if not to gain the hearts of our enemies, (Bishop Stillingfleet's *Ecclesiastical Cases*.) I heartily wish the clergy would be more careful in giving Testimonials, by looking on it as a matter of *conscience*, and not merely of *civility*; for otherwise it will be impossible to avoid pestering the church, with scandalous and ignorant

wretches, (*The same.*) It is certain that Bishops must answer at the day of judgment, for the neglect they shall be guilty of in admitting persons not duly qualified for the sacred function; which made St Chrysostom think that, of all men, Bishops would have the greatest account to give at the dreadful tribunal, and would have the greatest difficulty in working out their salvation. But it is not less certain that the church, the body of Christ, receiveth the most mortal wounds from her own sons, and that she hath suffered more from the ambition and pride, the luxury and covetousness, and temporising of bad Priests, than even from the persecution of tyrants themselves. *Life of Bishop Bull*, by Robert Nelson, Esq. 1713. p. 423.

Let every Bishop retire *within* his own diocese, and dwell among his clergy, as a father in his family. Let every clergyman reside upon his living, superintending his people as a shepherd his flock. And let no man be promoted to the first living in the kingdom merely because he is related to or connected with some great personage; but let the most active and laborious ministers, especially when the infirmities of age come on, be accounted "*worthy of double honour*," by being rewarded for their extraordinary services with the best living the country affords. The Dissenters and Methodists are moving heaven and earth and promote the cause of religion in their respective ways. If the 18,000 clergymen in the establishment would exert themselves for the good of souls with equal zeal and fervour, the Established Church would not only be *safer* as an establishment, but the divine protection would be more effectually engaged on *our behalf*. Righteous nations seldom fall.—*Plea for Religion*.

Ecclesiastical authority (says Archbishop Secker,) is not only too much limited, but too much despised, as matters now stand among us, to do almost any thing to check wickedness profaneness, &c. in the smallest degree. But the main support of piety and morals consists in the parochial labours of the clergy. If our country is to be preserved from utter profligacy and ruin, it must be by our means; and, take notice, we cannot lose our influence but, in a great measure, by our own fault. If we look on what we are apt to call our livings only as our livelihoods, and think of little more than living on the income of them, according to our own inclinations, if for want of "*a good conscience or faith unfeigned*," (1 Tim. i. 5.) we forfeit the protection of God; and by worldliness, or indolence, or levity in behaviour, talk or appearance (for gross vices I put out of the question,) lose, as we assuredly shall, the reverence of mankind; there will be no foundation

left for us to stand upon. Our legal establishment will shake and sink under us, if once it can be said we do the public little service; and much sooner if we are suspected of disquieting it. Wicked people will attack us without reserve; the good will be forced to condemn and give us up; and well would it be for us if that were the worst.—*Charges*, Lond. 1771. p. 240.

Our preaching will be of no avail, unless it be supported by our discipline. Surrounded as we are by enemies,—trained to the art of war from their youth,—marshalled under their subalterns and chiefs in command,—marched in regular succession from one district of the country to the other,—and animated by one kindred spirit of hostility to our church, are we not every day reminded that the strictest discipline is necessary on our part?—That each of us must regard himself, not as an unconnected individual, to whom the care of this or that parish is intrusted, but as soldiers of the common cause, by whose supineness or misconduct the strength and reputation of the whole must suffer. We have our laws of service, which we must obey,—our articles of war, by which we must be governed. If we desert, or slumber on our post,—if we hold improper correspondence with the enemy,—if we disregard the authority of our superiors, or disobey their lawful commands, our defeat is certain. Outram's *Sermons and Extracts*, 1809.

The following passage from Dr Thomas Brett's *Discourse on Church Government* will serve not only as an apology for this Appendix in particular, but also as an appropriate conclusion to the entire Treatise: I do again declare and solemnly protest, that I have not written any thing out of affection to a *party*, or any particular *interest* whatsoever, but out of a true and sincere *love* to the cause of the church and of the truth; and if I am mistaken in my notions, shall readily thank any one that shall rightly inform and convict me of my errors. I should have been heartily glad if I could as well have vindicated the practices of the church, as I trust I have done its constitution; and perhaps I may be censured by some as speaking truth unseasonably. But, for my own part, I am inclined to think that there are some truths which are always seasonable. I mean such truths as are always of consequence to preserve the honour and welfare of the Church of Christ. Of which nature I conceive are the following, viz. That Episcopacy is of *divine* right,—that the College of Presbyters are the Bishops' Council,—that to separate from the *orthodox* Bishops is *schismatical*—that schism is a *damnable* sin,—that if *occasional* con-

formity be lawful, *constant* communion is a duty,—that the church has a *right* to its synods or councils,—that laymen ought to have *no right* in mere *spiritual* judicature, or to exercise ecclesiastical censures, and the like. And though such things may not be agreeable to the *humour* of the present age, yet we are not obliged to say nothing of them, but should rather take the more pains to vindicate them, especially since so many books have been lately published against them. I have done my part towards vindicating some of them, how well I have performed it must be left to the judgment of others. What *success* it may please God to give to my weak endeavours, he only knows; and he who knows the sincerity of my heart, will, I trust, pardon the defects in my performance, for the sake of his Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom, with the Father, be all honour and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

THE RULE OF FAITH.

THE RULE OF FAITH, of the Reformed Episcopal Church, is the written word of God, the holy scriptures,—that of the Romanists is, to use their own words, “scripture and apostolic tradition.”

We confess indeed, that the unwritten word was the *first rule* of christians; but the apostles, conscious how easily a thing is forgotten which is not reduced to writing,—how soon what depends upon memory only becomes uncertain, and is variously represented according to the passions, or prejudices, or interests of the reporters, thought fit, under the immediate inspiration of God’s spirit, to consign to writing, that word which was first spoken by mouth. Thus St John expressly says, that his gospel was “*written*” that we “*may believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that believing, we might have life through his name,*” (John xx. 31.) that is, in order to make us christians. But even granting that the apostles did deliver some things by word of mouth (as our adversaries attempt to prove by certain texts of scripture, as 2 Thess. ii. 15.) yet it never can be proved what those things are, and that they are necessary to salvation, and have descended to them without the written word. We will readily receive, with the greatest veneration, whatsoever comes from the apostles by tradition, provided we can be *assured* that it comes from them.

The scriptures contain all the necessary articles of christian faith. —This is true, if the scriptures themselves be so; for to this truth they themselves bear witness, (John xx. 31.—Luke i. 4.—2 Tim. iii. 15. 16. 17.) St Paul exhorts all christians to “*contend earnestly for the faith, which was ONCE delivered unto the saints,*” (Jude 3.) “Therefore (says Bishop Stillingfleet,) all necessary doctrines of faith were at first delivered; and whatever articles cannot be proved to be delivered by the apostles, can never be made necessary to salvation,” (*Answer to Gother*, Works IV. p. 592.) And (as the Right Reverend Bishop Morton observes,) this one particle (*once*) must necessarily condemn all future additions to the faith for ever. “The apostles (says Irenæus) preached the necessary articles of salvation, and what they had preached they wrote down,” (Lib. III. c. 1.) Nay, the Romanists themselves attempt to prove their peculiar doctrines from

scripture; and even maintain, that whatsoever is contrary to it ought not to be received for divine truth. Do they not acknowledge by this, that all necessary articles are contained in them? Now, if they say that all their doctrines can be proved by plain scripture evidence, then they must reject the necessity of *unwritten* traditions (contrary to the Council of Trent, which gives as venerable authority to tradition as to scripture itself,) and acknowledge the scriptures to be a complete and perfect rule of faith. If they say they cannot, is it not great presumption to pretend to prove that from scripture, which they confess is not contained in it*?

Since, then, the holy scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation, it is next to be considered in what manner we are to arrive at a knowledge of its contents.—Now, there are two ways recommended for coming to the knowledge of Christ's religion. We are all agreed that every man is bound to make an enquiry into religion. But then here we differ: The Romanists say, that we are to examine till we have found out an infallible guide †, and, after having discovered it, we are then to submit, without farther examination, to all its interpretations of scripture. The Reformed, on the contrary, maintain, that as we cannot know the true church but by examining its doctrines, whe-

* "It is very little to the purpose to say that it is only an *argumentum ad hominem* to prove their doctrines; for I would fain know on what grounds they build their own belief of them, but on the promises of God in the scriptures.—These are miserable evasions."

† For this purpose, they do not refer us to the scriptures, but present us with certain marks which they think are peculiar to themselves, and which they call *Motives of Credibility*: as the *Unity, Universality, Splendor, Miracles, &c.* of the church. The use of these notes, to is find out the church before, and without the scriptures; for if they admit of a scripture proof, they must allow that we can know and understand the scriptures without the authority or interpretation of the church, which undermines the very foundation of Popery.—Now I desire to know how they will prove that there is a church without the scriptures? That you will say is visible itself, for we see a christian church in the world. But what is it I see? I see a company of men who call themselves a church, and is this seeing a church? A church must have a divine origin and institution; and therefore there is no seeing a church, without seeing its charter; for there can be no note or mark of the being of a church, but the institution. The church, I grant, was before the scriptures, because there was no necessity for that book, till a church was formed, nor even then neither, But when the inspired apostles were not present. Whilst they were alive and could be applied to, and their instructions were fresh on peoples' minds, the scriptures could not be much wanted.

ther they be Christ's or not; and since there is no way of knowing that, but by examining whether they agree with those doctrines taught in the scripture, therefore there is a necessity of allowing every person to try his faith by the holy scriptures (making use of the best means he can for the right understanding of them,) and afterwards to submit himself to the guides of the church, reserving however to himself a liberty of rejecting their decrees, if they contradict the holy scriptures. Or, in other words, if a reformed christian be required to give a reason of the hope that is in him, it will be necessary for him to give a rational account of the articles of his faith. But if a Romanist be required to do this it is sufficient for him to say, that he rests satisfied in the judgment of his superiors: or, to use the words of the Rheims Testament, "The man saith enough, and defends himself sufficiently that answers he is a Catholic, and that he will live and die in that faith, and that his church can give a reason of all things which are demanded of him."

In confutation of this dangerous delusion of the Romanists, and in confirmation of the grand principle of the Reformation, I shall prove, 1st, that a living infallible guide was not promised by Christ, nor did it exist in the primitive church; and, 2d, that supposing such a guide was promised by Christ, the Bishops of the Romish Church can have no better title to such a privilege than any other Bishops.

I. A living infallible guide was not promised by Christ, nor did it exist in the primitive church. On the contrary, the christian people were allowed a judgment of discretion in examining the grounds of their religion, and not to take them upon trust. Thus Christ himself, the author of our faith, though infallible, yet did not make his own infallibility the only reason of mens' faith, but referred them "to the law and the prophets," which he expounded to the conviction of all honest and teachable minds; and if they refused to believe on these

Miracles are no marks of the true church, for they have been wrought by impostors, and it has been prophesied that there shall arise "*false prophets who shall perform lying wonders,*" and that "*Satan himself shall be transformed into an angel of light.*" It is always observed, says Bishop Stillingfleet, that your miracles are most talked on, where people are most ignorant, and therefore most apt to be deceived. Your Priests, like the devils in the primitive times, can do no feats when their *opposers* are by. Their juggling and impostures have been so notorious in this kind, that their pretences to miracles, have made more infidels than catholics, by making men more apt to question, whether there were ever any *real* miracles done, than believe the truth of yours.

terms, they must have continued infidels. The method our Saviour adopted was to convince by proper and conclusive arguments ; on being questioned, he appealed to the prophets, "*Search the scriptures, for they testify of me. If I bear witness of myself my witness is not true.*" And therefore produces the testimony of John the Baptist, of his Father at his baptism, and of the miracles that he wrought. "*The same works which I do, they bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me. If ye do not believe me, believe the works.*" But above all, he alleges the scripture in vindication of his person and his doctrine, and recommends to all men the use of their private judgment, "*Why of yourselves judge ye not what is right ?*" And least any should think that this noble faculty was bestowed on them for worldly occasions only, he reproaches the Jews for not making use of it in enquiries into religion, "*Ye can discern the face of the heaven, but how is it that ye cannot discern this time,*" which the scriptures plainly pointed out to those that would use their judgment to discern.

The practice of the apostles was conformable to that of our Saviour. For although, from their infallible inspiration, they could and did claim to themselves a power of absolutely deciding what the christian faith was, yet so far from requiring their converts to believe merely on their authority, they uniformly argued the case with them, and endeavoured to convince their understandings, and not only permitted, but applauded the diligence of those who would not receive the gospel upon their bare affirmation, but "*searched the scriptures to see whether those things were so.*" We have many of their epistles, all of which are directed to the churches in general, to the laity as well as the clergy, and which were to be examined equally by them both. Thus, "*I speak unto wise men, judge what I say,*" (1 Cor. x. 15.) "*Judge in yourselves is it comely,*" (xi. 13.) "*Prove all things, hold fast that which is good,*" (1 Thess. v. 21.) "*Beloved,*" saith John, "*believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God : because many false prophets are gone out into the world,*" (1 John iv. 1.) "*Be ready to give an answer to every one that asketh a reason of the hope that is in you ;*" and it was St Paul's advice to the Corinthians, that they should "*examine themselves whether they were in the faith,*" and he renounces all dominion over their faith.

This faculty of examining into religion was not intended by the apostles to cease as soon as men had embraced the christian doctrine. For the precepts given by the apostles belong to those who are *already christians*, and that concerning the matters proposed by their guides ;

may, they are expressly commanded to try and examine all pretences to infallibility and revelation upon this great reason, because there should be many false pretenders to them. "*Beloved, believe not every spirit; but try the spirits whether they be of God, for many false prophets are gone into the world.*" They are commanded "*not to believe any other gospel, though apostles, or an angel from heaven should preach it,*" and how should they know whether it were another, or the same, if they were not to examine and compare them? They are enjoined to "*judge for themselves what is right,*" and "*contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints;*" it might be a new faith for any thing they could know, if they were not competent judges of what was "*once delivered.*" They are frequently charged to "*beware of seducers and false guides, that should come in the name of Christ and his apostles;*" they are told that "*there should be a falling away and departing from the faith;*" and that "*the time will come when men will not endure sound doctrine, and shall turn away their ears from the truth and believe fables; that false apostles shall come with all deceivableness of unrighteousness, with powers, and signs, and lying wonders.*" To what end or purpose are all these things said, if men, being once christians, are no longer to exercise their own judgment, but deliver it up into the hands of their guides? What is this but to put them under a necessity of being deluded when their guides please? And, as our Saviour says, "*when the blind lead the blind, they shall both fall into the ditch.**"

Moreover, although the Romanists are so extremely averse to allow, that the church is to be found out by comparing its doctrines with the scriptures, yet they are at length obliged to submit to this method.—One mark of the true church, according to all Romish divines, is apostolicity; and, as Dr De la Hogue lays down, this "*consists not only in a continued succession of pastors, but also in the holding that doctrine which the apostles preached, as delivered to them by Christ,*" (*De Ecclesia*, p. 69.) According to this mark, then, we cannot know the true church, till we have compared its doctrines with those taught by the apostles in their writings, and therefore we must use our judgment, and may understand the scripture without an infallible interpreter, and consequently must do all that for the preventing of which an infallible guide is said to be necessary. So that after all,

* 1 John iv. 1. Gal. i. 8. Jude, 4. Matt. xxiv. 4. v. 23. 24. Acts xx. 29. 30. 1 Tim. iv. 1. 2 Thess. ii. 3. 2 Tim. iv. 3. 4. 2 Thess. ii. 9. 10. Matt. xv. 14.

even every Romanist, in order to be satisfied that he professes the truth, is not blindly to take up his principles and practices from any pretended infallible guide; for, according to his own principles, he cannot know that his guide is infallible, until he tries by this mark, but must examine, by the word of God, what things he is to believe in order to his salvation.

But let us see whether the controversies which arose in the apostles' times, were decided by their authority, and which all were obliged to submit to without any farther enquiry. When the Corinthians doubted of the resurrection, St Paul did not think it sufficient to assert that it was a defined and received article of the creed; but proved its truth by unanswerable arguments, and defended it against all the objections that had rendered it suspected. When the churches of Galatia were divided upon the question, whether the Gentile Christians were obliged to observe the law of Moses, and many made use of the authority of Peter and James to the prejudice of christian liberty, St Paul undertakes our defence, and throws off not only the authority of men, though they were apostles, but of angels: "*Though an angel from heaven should preach any other gospel, let him be accursed.*"

And further, that this method of resolving faith into the authority of a visible judge, was unknown in the church even in the apostles' days, is evident from those early heresies, which sprung up in the church. For let any reasonable man tell me how it is possible there ever should have been any heresy in the church, if all christians had received the authority of an infallible judge, together with their christianity. Men might have renounced christianity and the visible judge together; but had they then acknowledged a visible judge, it had been a contradiction to pretend to the name of christians, and to oppose the doctrine of the infallible chair. Had there been a visible judge in those days known to all christians, it had been impossible there should ever have been any heresies in the church, as those men must grant, who think it necessary therefore there should be such a visible judge to make all men hold the same opinion, and to prevent the rise and growth of heresies; which must suppose that the authority of a visible would effect this, or else this argument cannot prove the necessity of a visible judge. If then the appointment of a visible judge would certainly prevent all heresies, and yet from the beginning of christianity there have been heresies in the church, it is evident to a demonstration, that there was no visible judge in those days.

Now, if the apostles did not think fit to use this method of infal-

libility, it seems rather incongruous, for the Bishops in succeeding ages to pretend to it. For, as the gifts of the Spirit grew less, methinks the way of teaching should rather be less than more magisterial; unless some new paraclete had thought fit to bestow on them the gift of infallible decision. But the generation next to the apostles knew nothing of this matter, but confess the state of the church, in their times, to be inferior to that of the apostolic age, and that heretics then could not be so effectually suppressed, as they were by the immediate disciples of our Saviour; who made his church an infallible in objection. But it will be replied, "has not Christ promised to protect it *"against the gates of hell,"* and to be *"with his apostles to the end of the world,"* &c. And who can suspect that Christ should ever abandon his church, and suffer her to become a prey to her enemies after the sacred engagements of so many promises to the contrary?" Truly Christ has promised to preserve his church against the gates of hell, *i. e.* from being *totally* destroyed; and this certainly may be done without making all or any part of it *infallible*. That this promise does not secure the church from a partial destruction or defection, our adversaries must themselves confess; and that in no age the pure church has been destroyed, I have already proved.—"But he has promised to be with the apostles always for ever unto the end of the world; and therefore the Bishops, who are successors of the apostles are infallible judges of controversies." Now *"for ever"* as it relates to an infallible direction, must be appropriated to the apostles, otherwise all their successors must be infallible judges, which will not serve the designs of the Romish church.

II. And indeed, all the promises which are supposed to confer infallibility, do not apply to one Bishop more than another, and consequently all are infallible, or none at all; unless our adversaries can shew us any particular promise reserved for those Bishops subject to the Bishop of Rome. But this is utterly impossible, for it is an undoubted fact that all Bishops and all churches were in all ages equally liable to fall into error; and Christ's promise of general assistance to *"be with them always,"* was made to them, on express condition that they were to *"teach the people to observe those things only which Christ had commanded them,"* Matt. xxviii. 20.

Do we find that any of the primitive Bishops or churches pretended to infallibility*?—No. In the controversies which arose about

* The Romanists themselves must acknowledge, not only that single Bishops, but even that particular councils are liable to error, (*De la Hogue* p. 165.) and

matters of faith, they never made use of this modern argument of infallibility, but appealed to scripture, and the doctrine and practice of the apostolic churches. Thus Justin Martyr and Irenæus both wrote against heresies, but there is not the least mention of such a

have oftentimes fallen into (what they themselves esteem,) damnable heresies. Thus, did not multitudes of their own Bishops embrace the Protestant heresy, as they term it? And, if we may believe themselves, were not the Greek Bishops formerly in their communion? Did not the Council of Arminum, wherein were assembled above 400 Bishops, err in maintaining the doctrine of Arius in ancient times? (*Soc. om. Lib. IV. c. 3.*) What security, then, have the members of the Roman communion, that their Bishops do not likewise err in explaining the Council of Trent. Dr De la Hogue allows himself, that the members of that church are not bound to give an *irrevocable* assent to the instructions of their Bishop, but merely *revocable* and *conditional*, (*De Ecclesia*, p. 110.) consequently they must live in a *continual doubt* of the truth of the doctrines proposed to their belief by their clergy. On the contrary, what great satisfaction do not the members of our Reformed Church enjoy, who are all satisfied themselves, or at least at liberty to be satisfied, by the perusal of their bibles, of the truth of their doctrines.

A few quotations from authentic records, composed *before* our Reformation, will soon convince us what active guardians of the purity of Christian doctrine the Popish Bishops were at that time, and what an excellent opportunity errors and corruptions had of coming in, even with the connivance of these infallible guides. In the eighth age, Charlemagne makes this complaint of the clergy, that "laying aside all sound and wholesome doctrine, and little regarding that precept of the apostles, (*If an angel preach any other doctrine let him be accursed*,") they transgress the commandments of the Fathers, and bring into the church such doctrines as were never known to Christ and his apostles." (*De Imaginib. in Pref.*) "What then was the appearance of the Roman Church (says Cardinal Baronius, speaking of the tenth century,) and how deformed? When whores, no less powerful than sordid, bore the sway at Rome, at whose pleasure Sees were changed, Bishops appointed, and, what is horrible to be heard, their gallants were thrust into the chair of Peter, false Popes, who would not have been mentioned but in order to mark out the times in the catalogue of the Popes," (*ad. An. 912.*) And again, "What kind of of Presbyters, Deacons, and Cardinals, must we suppose were chosen by these monsters, since it is natural that every one should generate his own likeness. Christ was then undoubtedly in a deep sleep in his ship, and what is worse, there were no disciples to awaken him,—they were even desirous that the Lord would sleep for ever, and would never rise in judgment." The state of the Roman Church, at the beginning of the Grand Reformation, in the sixteenth century, is thus described in the directions given by Pope Adrian VI. to Cheregatus his nuncio at the convention of Norimber, in 1525. He ordered him to confess candidly, that "to the faults of men, and chiefly of the Priests and Bishops, these disturbances were owing: that even in the holy

claim; on the contrary they appeal to the scriptures, which Irenæus calls "the immoveable rule of truth," "which was committed to writing to be the foundation and pillar of our faith," and that "they contain the whole will of God." It is true he makes use of tradition, because the heretics made this their pretence; but then it is used only as a *negative* argument, to shew that the apostolic churches never taught any such traditionary doctrines,—and this certainly was *at that time* a good argument; but there would be no force in it now, on account of the vast distance of time, and the alterations that have taken place in those churches. In the same manner Tertullian appeals to tradition, but his misfortune is not only to omit the infallible judge, but to preclude him in the very beginning of his book: "what then (says he,) if a Bishop or a Deacon, &c. nay if a martyr or a doctor should fall from the rule, must heresy therefore be truth? What! do we receive doctrines for the sake of the persons, or persons for the sake of doctrines? But how shall we know truth from heresy, if we may not depend on the person of the infallible judge? And do not those who resolve their doctrine into the definition of an infallible judge, approve the doctrine for the person's sake?"

Concerning the means used in the primitive church for putting an end to controversies, we have a remarkable instance in the dispute about rebaptizing heretics. This was managed by Cyprian and other Bishops of Asia and Africa on the one hand, and the Bishop of Rome on the other. He pleaded custom and tradition: Cyprian that "custom without truth was but ancient error, and that the question ought to be examined by scripture;" because Christ said in his gospel, "*I am truth*;" and the only way to prevent errors is to have recourse to the head and fountain of divine tradition, i. e. to the holy scripture, which Cyprian calls "the evangelical and apostolical tradition." This he also declares to be the test by which all later traditions are to be tried. "Whence have you that tradition? Comes it from the authority of the Lord, and of the gospel, or from the epistles of the apostles? For God testifies that we are to do those things which are written, &c. If it be commanded, or contained in

See itself many abominable things had been perpetrated,—that there were many abuses in spirituals, and finally, that all things were so changed for the worse, that the corruption spreading from the head to the members, from the Popes to the lowest Bishops, had diffused itself so widely, that scarcely one was found acting right, and free from the infection. See *Hist. Council. Trid. a P. Sarpio*, p. 20.

the epistles or acts of the apostles, then let us observe it as a divine and holy tradition." Thus in the opinion of the African Bishops, controversies were to be decided not by the decision of an infallible judge, but by the holy scriptures; of the sense of which each Bishop determined for himself, according to the best of his judgment. But that each of them was an infallible judge of controversies, is contrary to the plainest fact, since many of them in those purest ages fell into the grossest heresy; and even in this very controversy between the African Bishops and the Bishop of Rome, if we compare their opinions concerning the rebaptisation of heretics with what the Council of Nice determined on that question, we shall find that they were both in the wrong.

Some may perhaps be of opinion, that GENERAL COUNCILS are the only infallible interpreters of scripture; and, Alphonsus a Castro imputes the number and extravagance of the heresies of those times to the want of an infallible judge, which he takes to be a general council. Let us suppose, then, that God did actually suffer his church (for the first 300 years,) to be deprived of the only certain means of preserving the purity of christianity against heretics, surely when councils were assembled, with the concurrence of Popes, all dispute and heresy must be at an end; for when the infallible judge has taken his place, all knots in religion must be untied, and all doubts removed; for who is so ignorant or perverse as to dispute against his sentence, whom all the christian world must know to be incapable of mistake? Now the misfortune is, that, after many general councils received by the Bishop of Rome and the greatest part of Christendom, we hear no tidings of an infallible judge, nor of the Roman resolution of faith into the mere authority of Papal Councils, without appeal to every man's reason; for whatever the Fathers of the council believed themselves, it is plain fact that other men did not believe it. The heretics whom they condemned did not acquiesce in their authority, which they would certainly have done, had it been the general belief in that age, that the decrees of such councils were final and conclusive, to be believed by all men, and to be examined by none. Yet controversies were so far from being ended by them, that they broke out still more violently after them. After the Council of Nice, the Fathers appealed to men's private reason, as is evident from the writings of Athanasius, Hilary, &c. in defence of the doctrine of the trinity; and Athanasius in all his apologies forgot this great and unanswerable defence, that he followed an infallible guide. He explains and confirms from scripture, the notion of Consubstantial, but would not be so happy as to urge

that it must be true, because the infallible judge had pronounced it. He deservedly commends the Nicene Council, and the faith defined there, but his reasons overturn the notion of infallibility: for he received the determination of that great assembly, because, in his judgment, he was convinced that it was true and consonant to scripture, but did not therefore think it must be as true as gospel, because it was the sentence of an infallible judge. At last, in the manner of our Protestant resolution of faith, he declares, that in those controversies that divided the church, "we ought to pray for the spirit of discretion, that every one may know what to receive and what to reject; a faithful disciple of the gospel is able to distinguish between truth and pretence, because he has the spirit of discerning, but the simple is carried away with every colour."

The authority of a general council in those days was deservedly sacred and venerable, not as an infallible judge, which it never pretended to,—but as the most certain means they could possibly have to understand what was, and in all ages had been the received doctrine of the church. They assembled, not to make *new* articles of faith, which no council in the world ever had authority to do; but to *declare* what was the truly ancient and apostolic faith, and to explain it so as might express the true meaning, and meet with the distempers of the age. But it is replied, "The council anathematized all those who did not receive their decrees;" and does this prove that they denied all christians a liberty of examining them? Might they not declare such doctrines to be damnable heresies, and reject such men from their communion, without believing their decrees to be so infallible and sacred, that no man must examine them? Do not the Reformed Churches do this, without pretending to such an absolute authority over our faith? And was not this practice used in ancient *particular* councils which are confessed to be infallible, as well as in *general*? Do we not hear of the Pope's anathemas every day, yet his infallibility is denied by many that are esteemed good Papists? How then are anathemas evidences of infallibility? Councils (says Dr Field,) denounce anathema, not because they think every one that disobeys their decree to be accursed; but because they are persuaded in particular that that is the eternal truth of God which they propose; therefore they accurse them that obstinately shall resist, as St Paul willeth every christian man to anathematize an angel from heaven, if he shall teach him any other doctrine than he hath already learned: yet every particular christian is not free from a possibility of erring.

If then the most general councils of the primitive church were not held as infallible judges and interpreters of scripture, but were to be examined and received only as far as they agreed with the holy scriptures, with how much reason are we obliged to reject, as our rule of faith, the impious decrees of that assembly of Romish Bishops which met at Trent about 250 years ago, and presumed to style itself the General Council of Trent, to define what doctrines were to be received by all christians in the world, as the genuine faith of Christ. The nullity and vanity of this assembly has been repeatedly proved, both by Protestant and Romish writers.—See M. Du Ranchin's *Review*, and Father Paul's *History* of it. Bishop Stratford's *Discourse* against R. Holden, with a *Defence* of Father Paul against Henricus and Palavicini. *Preserv.* Tit. I.

Thus it appears that the primitive christians did not acknowledge a supreme infallible guide, either in the persons of Bishops convened in council, or considered singly as presiding over their flocks; but were obliged, by the law of God, to examine themselves the doctrines of their teachers, and adhere to them no longer than whilst they adhered to the holy scriptures. Let us now examine the extent of the submission of private christians to their spiritual governors.

1. A private christian may, without submission to an infallible guide, be *certainly directed to the holy scriptures as the word of God*. It is a common saying of Papists, that "we have received the bible from them, and why not receive the interpretation of it from them also." But we never received the bible from the Roman Church, but from the testimony of the universal church in all ages and places, and this, too, not as the body of christians, but as rational, honest men; nay, even from the testimony of heretics and infidels. For such is the uniform testimony borne to the authenticity of the sacred writings. The church, when she appears as a *witness* to facts, proving that such and such points are *revealed truths*, must lay aside her character of *church* itself, because she receives it from those revealed truths; for whether there can be a church or not, we can only know from the scriptures. Herein we must consider her as a *witness*, and not as a *judge*. We receive the Old Testament from the Jews as a *witness*, but by no means as a *judge* or interpreter of it, otherwise we must reject the true Messiah!

2. The extent of a reformed christian's submission to his spiritual guides.—The Romanists, it is well known, are bound to an *implicit obedience* to their Priests and Bishops. "*The oxen did plow and labour,*

(says Job, i. 14.) and the asses fed by them." "By the oxen (says Cardinal Bellarmin,) are meant the learned men; by the asses the ignorant people, who, out of simple belief, rest satisfied in the judgment of their superiors;" (*De Just. Lib. I. c. 7.*) The Reformed, on the contrary, rest wholly on the scriptures, as the rule of their faith; and while they hold it their duty generally to submit themselves to the church, yet they hold that she is not to be obeyed if she contradict them; and of course we must leave to every man to judge whether she do or not. But we, at the same time, declare that he does it at his peril; that in the use which he makes of his private judgment he is deeply responsible to God, and more particularly so, when he does it in opposition to the church. In matters of dispute, the Priest's lips are to preserve knowledge; and here it becomes private men to be modest, and to preserve a great respect for the sentiments of their guides. But there is a great difference between asking the way when we are at a stand, and putting out our eyes and leaving ourselves entirely to be led by another. We may use our own eyes and our guide's too. "The hearers (says Basil,) that are instructed in the scriptures must examine the doctrine of their teachers; they must receive those things which are agreeable to scripture, and reject what are contrary to it." *In Moralium Regula*, 72 in initio.

3. The extent of the authority of the guides of the church.—We are far from denying all reasonable and just authority to the guides of the church: nay, in matters of faith, their authority is so sacred, that all christians are bound in conscience quietly to submit to their decrees, where there is not plain evidence against them: But we say indeed that no man nor assembly of men, have such authority as to oblige us to believe all their decrees without examination, much less contrary to the judgment and practice of the first ages of the church, and therefore we do not require that men should believe merely on the authority of their teachers, without believing why they do so.—In short, the use we make of our guides is this, to inform our judgments that we may be able to understand for ourselves. Thus our Saviour taught his disciples, "*he opened their understandings, that they might understand the scriptures,*" and thus the apostles and primitive doctors taught the world, by expounding scripture to them, which does not signify merely to tell them what the sense of scripture is, and requiring them to believe it,—but shewing them out of the scripture that this is, and must be the true sense of it.

Objection. "Are not the Pastors more capable of teaching the

people, than the people are of teaching themselves?"—An admirable reason! (says Bishop Stratford.) Let us see how it will hold in other matters. Is not the tutor more capable of teaching the scholar, than the scholar is of teaching himself? He therefore will have more of the true sense of any book in logic, than never looks upon it himself; but only hears a lecture once in a week or month from his tutor upon some part, than he that makes the book his constant study.

Objection. "Does not the scripture expressly order us to *obey* our pastors?"—But does not the same scripture command "*children to obey their parents, and servants their masters,*" (Eph. vi. 1.—Col. iii. 22.) And are we hence to conclude that this obedience is *absolute*, "But the church can have no authority, unless men are bound to believe, without examination, whatsoever she prescribes."—If so, then she had no authority in our Saviour's and the apostles' days; no, nor for several ages after them. For if any had been owned in the fourth century, how came it to pass that, after the Nicene Council, the Arian heresy spread more than it had done before. The Popish parallel between a spiritual guide and a civil judge is most unhappy; because we are obliged to abide by the sentence of our judges in civil matters, even when we do not think it just: does it hence follow that we must obey our spiritual guides without examining. The judge only determines our external action, but cannot touch our consciences, as our spiritual guides do in their commands. And although we do not appeal from the judge, it cannot hence be inferred that we think him infallible.

I shall now answer the objections which may be brought against what I have said.—"Why (it is asked,) does the Reformed Church peremptorily require conformity to her faith and worship, and yet allow private christians to examine them by scripture, and reject them if they should dislike them.—Can any thing be more unjust than to excommunicate a person for rejecting, as erroneous, a doctrine which he has a right to examine, and consequently to reject it if he thinks it unorthodox.—And has not this principle a barefaced tendency to the multiplying of schisms without end."

As for the first part of this objection, I answer, that in this we only follow the example of the apostles and the primitive church. They, as I have already proved, enjoined the people to "*obey their governors,*" and to "*hear the church,*" yet at the same time, to "*prove all things.*" In like manner our church has fixed terms of communion truly catholic, and not only allows, but affords to every one the liberty of using

all the means they can (if they will not follow her *blindfold*) of forming a right judgment concerning them, and therefore of using the scriptures; which are not only the best in themselves, but also come within the compass of the abilities and leisure of all, more or less. We are to use the liberty of judging for ourselves by these means; under this consideration, that we are to be accountable for it at the day of judgment. We think therefore, that reasonable men cannot lie under a greater obligation, to take care that they proceed in their search after truth with all care and sincerity. This is the provision that God hath made for the maintaining truth and peace in his church; that governors cannot abuse their authority in commanding, nor the people their liberty of judging, whether the command can be obeyed with a good conscience, but at the peril of their souls. For, if a private christian reject the faith and the communion of the church, without a just and necessary cause, he is a heretic and schismatic, liable to the censures of the church in this world, and to the vengeance of God in the next! If he reject an erroneous communion, he incurs the censures of the church, and if he embrace it he is in danger of a future judgment. "*For if the blind lead the blind they shall both fall into the ditch.*"—These are the proper limits of all human authority both in church and state; below this there is no authority, and above it, it is not human authority: for a blind obedience can be due to none but God, and he himself seldom exacts it.

As for those that impute the disorders and schisms of the church to the liberty of judging by the scriptures, which we permit, I would be glad to know what means they are provided with to preserve unity. They tell us often, and we are even nauseated with the repetition of so frivolous a pretence, that God has left an infallible judge of controversies amongst them, to whom we ought to submit. But notwithstanding this pretended provision, is it not apparent that there are violent controversies and endless divisions in the christian church? Do we see the effects of such a provision; or rather is it not evident that God hath not provided an infallible means of ending controversies, or rather of preventing them, because controversies are neither prevented nor ended, but have existed since the first preaching of the gospel? "But would they not be ended, if all men would submit to the infallible judge?" Which is as much as to say, that an infallible judge is not an infallible means of ending controversies, because men may *choose* whether they will submit to him or not. So that this very pretence supposes that God has left not an absolute, but only a

conditional provision against schisms, that is to say, if all men would do their duty as they ought and might, which is the very case as I mentioned before. And if we must not submit to such a pretended judge, till we have reason to believe him to be what he pretends, then no small controversy will arise, whether he be such a judge or not, and in order to determine this, we must necessarily use our private judgment in interpreting scripture.

It argues great want of ingenuity, or great weakness of judgment in men, to exclaim against the Reformed Episcopal Church, on account of divisions and separations from it. For the present separations are no greater argument against it, than the ancient separations were against the primitive church*, or than the Protestant separations against the Roman Church. For have not merely private persons, whole provinces, nay whole nations separated from the Romish communion? And since there may be such multitudes of deserters where infallibility is challenged, what greater security can be given against them than the Reformed Church does?—What advantage, then, has the Church of Rome over any other profession of christians? We are certain that the mere authority of their church has been no more *effectual* in preventing separations, than that of ours hath been; but their is another method adopted in several countries which is far more effectual, viz. the *Inquisition*. This in truth is all the *effectual means* they possess above us; but God keep us from such barbarous and diabolical means of preventing separations. However, that gracious Pope, Paul IV. attributed the settling of it in Spain to the *inspiration of the Holy Ghost*; not that Holy Ghost certainly, that came down from heaven upon the apostles, but that which was conveyed in a portmantau from Rome to the Council of Trent. All other means are but probable,—this is the most effectual; insomuch that the same Paul IV.

* When Celsus reproached the primitive christians with their divisions, and multitude of their sects, Origen had no better reply to make than "That this misfortune was not peculiar to them, for the same thing happened to physicians and philosophers; yet to wise men it was no prejudice against those professions." He never once gives the least intimation of that *never-failing* remedy against divisions, the infallible judge, (*Contr. Cels. Lib. III.*) "Our divisions (says Clemens Alexander,) are the first things the Pagans produce against us; we ought not to believe, they say, because of the difference of sects amongst you," (*Strom. Lib. VII.*) The contentions of the primitive christians, upon every occasion, were so very intemperate, that they were with scorn objected by Pagans, and derided in their theatres. See *Cels. ap. Orig.—Euseb. de Vita Const. Lib. II. c. 60.*

declared in a speech to his cardinals before his death, that "the authority of the Roman See depends only on the office of the Inquisition."

These have been the kind, the tender, the primitive, the christian means of suppressing sects and heresies in the Romish Church. In countries where the Inquisition is not established, the utmost endeavours are used to prevent both priests and laity from reading a fair translation of the bible, or the controversial tracts of the Reformed Church, but the obedience to their clergy as infallible guides in controversies is inculcated on all. Yet notwithstanding these precautions, men *will* judge for themselves, and their infallible guides have been deserted both by Bishops and Priests, and innumerable multitudes of the laity.

It is very well known that we do all in our power, both to prevent and to reclaim separatists, but God never wrought miracles to curb incorrigible persons, and would not have us to go out of the way of our duty to suppress sects and heresies. The greatest severities have not effected it, which made one of the inquisitors in Italy complain, that after forty years experience, wherein they had destroyed above 100,000 persons for heresy (as they call it,) it was so far from being suppressed, that it was extremely strengthened and increased. What wonder is it, then, that the Dissenters should continue among us, who do not use such barbarous methods to reclaim them; but wisely disowning the pretence of infallibility, we make use of the best arguments against them from a just authority, and the sinfulness and folly of their refusing to submit to it. Thus were heretics and schismatics suppressed in the primitive church.

"Well, but if there be no infallible guide, how shall we arrive at any certainty in our religion? Is it not a contradiction to experience to say, that the meaning of scripture is plain, when so few can agree what it is? Is it not inconsistent with the wisdom of God to leave his church without an unerring interpreter of scripture?"—I answer: 1st, We are not fit judges of what God ought to do, but ought to be thankful for what he has done. He surely knows how to govern his church without our direction!—2d, We can be very certain of the necessary principles of religion, without the supposition of an infallible guide. We do not deny, that there are places of great difficulty in the scriptures, but we assert, that, to an honest and attentive reader, every thing that is necessary to be believed, is sufficiently plain and clear. Surely Christ and his apostles *preached* intelligibly to their hearers, who were in general people of the meanest capacities. And could they not write as intelligibly as they preached, especially since

they wrote the same things, and almost in the same form of words? And are not the people (as I have already proved,) commanded to search the scriptures and detect false prophets by them?—3d, If we cannot understand the scriptures without an infallible guide, how shall we ever know who this is, and how to find him. This information is surely not to be derived from the guide in dispute, for that would be arguing in a circle; and “*if I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true,*” (John v. 31.) But if they direct us to scripture, then it is evident that the scripture may be understood without an infallible guide. And if we may arrive at a certain sense of those texts concerning infallibility without an infallible guide, then why may we not be as certain of the sense of other texts as plain as them, without such an interpreter? For there is no article of our creed so hard to be found there, as the infallibility of the Roman Bishops.

But “do not all heretics appeal to scripture?”—This argument proves nothing, because it proves too much; for it is equally an argument against all rules. Heretics have appealed to *reason*, therefore reason is no rule,—heretics have pleaded *tradition*, therefore tradition is not to be pleaded. Heathens have appealed to *universal consent*, (“*All Asia and the world worshipeth Diana,*” Acts xix. 27.) therefore it is not to be regarded. The later Arians pleaded the *Councils* of Sirmium and Rimini, therefore councils are not to be appealed to, *Miracles* have been pretended to by impostors as signs of truth, therefore true miracles are no proof.—All this objection is a transferring the fault from the men, and fixing it upon the faultless rule. “But do not some who seem to follow the scripture, deny the divinity of Christ?” What then? This is not for want of evidence in scripture, but from making or devising ways to avoid this evidence. Will any one dare to say, that there was no clear evidence from the word of Christ and his miracles, *that they were of God*; because the Pharisees and other unbelieving Jews, who conversed with him, and saw his miracles, and heard his word, did not acknowledge him as God. In short, it does not follow that there is no truth in the world, because there is much falsehood. Others may think themselves right as well as we; but the only way to talk to the purpose is to examine the evidence in any controversy,—to consider not who *says* he is in the right, but who *proves* it.

And yet this argument to prove the *uncertainty* of the Protestant faith from the different opinions among Protestants (says Dr Sherlock,) signifies nothing as to our disputes with the Church of Rome. For

ask them what they would think of the Protestant faith, were all Protestants of a mind? Would their consent and agreement prove the certainty of the Protestant faith? Then the Protestant faith in opposition to Popery is very certain: for they all *agree* in condemning the errors of the Church of Rome; and thus, I think, they get nothing by this argument: for if the dissensions of Protestants prove the uncertainty of their faith, as to such matters wherein they differ, then by the same rule their *agreement* in opposition to Popery, shews their great *certainly* in such matters; and this, I suppose, is no great inducement to a Protestant to turn Papist.

But even supposing the guides of the Roman Church to be infallible, what advantages has it over other churches which do not pretend to infallibility? Have they cleared the sense of any one doubtful text, by virtue of infallibility, during all the time they have laid claim to it? No; on the contrary, for the sense of any obscure passages in those holy books we are indebted to the learning and industry of fallible commentators. Why do they not (says Dr Trapp,) once for all publish to the world an entire infallible comment on the bible, so as to prevent all disputes for the future. But alas! it has always been their way not to *explain* what is obscure, but to *obscure* what is plain. This is the true use they have made of their infallibility.

Again, what greater certainty do its members possess more than Protestants. From what source do they derive their infallible instructions? From the decrees of the Trent Council? But can they be certain of their meaning? Those decrees are sometimes *general* and *ambiguous*, and there have been several expositions of them, as Sotos Bellarmin, Bossuet, &c.* which, in many points are *directly opposite*, yet

* The doubtfulness of their doctrines (says Bishop Patrick,) appears from this, that there is not only *variety*, but contrariety of judgment about them in their own church, which plainly argues great perplexity and uncertainty. Of which there needs no other proof than the famous books of Bellarmin, who, in the entrance on every question, gives an account of the contentions and contradictions of those who have written upon it among themselves. At this day, they are not better agreed in the explication of several points in difference between us, particularly about the worship given to images, and the invocation of saints, which some of their greatest doctors mollify (as they do other points,) into downright heresy, as such explications are accounted by others. (*Preserv.* IV. p. 96.) See this clearly exemplified in *Dr Wake's First Defence of the Exposition*, p. 90. Bishop Hall has collected 303 differences of opinion in the Romish Church from Bellarmin, and above sixty different opinions in the point of confession alone.

approved by different Popes! And how few are there, that have time or learning to read the councils; but if this difficulty be overcome, they are forbidden under great curses to explain and comment on the decrees; for this office is reserved to the Pope himself, (*Bulla Pii IV. super Confirm. Conc. Trid.*) The resolution of the people's faith, therefore, is into the honesty and skill of their fallible Bishops and Priests; and as the people are likewise fallible, they may misunderstand the instructions of their guides (fallible or infallible,) and thus farewell to all possible means of arriving at *certainly* in religion, unless every body be infallible first! And has not a Protestant, who studies the *infallible scripture*, and uses the best reason and judgment he has to understand it, assisted by his clergy, as much certainty and infallibility as all this amounts to?

In short, we Protestants do not require an infallible, but *sufficient* certainty for our faith,—not an impossibility of erring, but an assurance that we do not err. Our Reformed Episcopal Church has offered all reasonable satisfaction to mankind, that it follows the true sense of scripture:

1. By publishing an excellent translation of the scriptures, and not locking them up, but leaving it free and open for all persons to judge concerning the doctrines it teaches. Which argues a great

The very *Index Expurgatorius*, which contains a list of those Romish authors, whose works are prohibited from being read under pain of excommunication, is a proof of the uncertainty of their doctrines. Nay, how many disputes are carrying on at the present day, between Doctors Milner, Douglas, O'Connor, Messrs Plowden, Clinch, Butler, &c. on such important points as the extent of their Pope's authority, whether Bishops are exclusive judges in matters of faith? Whether the present Pope is a heretic or not? &c. And between the two above-mentioned Doctors (who are Bishops,) and the French clergy in England, who have declared to the world that "Pius VII. has introduced schism and heresy itself into the bosom of the church, and that heresy has begun to gain a complete triumph in France, of which Pius is the primary cause, and that on the ruins of the old church in France a new one is established, different in *many essential* articles from the Church of Christ," (*Milner's Past. Letter*, 1808. p. 7. 78.) These principles Dr Milner has arraigned as "impious and schismatical," and, on the other hand, Dr O'Connor declares Dr Milner's opinions on other points to be "heretical and Mahometan." (*Second Letter*, p. 53. 66. 87.) Such are the fruits of their infallibility and the supremacy of "the Vicar of Christ." See *An Hist. Account of the Divisions in the Roman Church to the end of the seventeenth century*. *Stillingfleet's Works*, IV. p. 133. *Geddes's History of the Schisms that have been in the Roman Sec. Tracts*.

assurance that she is not afraid of any opposition to be found in the word of God, in the articles of our religion.

2. By not pretending to deliver the sense of scripture on her own authority. If she required her members to depend wholly on her interpretation of it, without examining themselves; that very thing would render her authority suspicious with all inquisitive men, who always mistrust where there is too much caution.

3. By her constantly appealing to the primitive church, as the best witness of her adhering to the true sense of scripture*. For she has always contended, that the first and purest ages of the church certainly best understood the sense of scripture: the Church of Rome, on the contrary, pretending that the interpretation of it belongs to the present Catholic Church, which it pretends to be, against the plainest evidence of scripture.

If it be asked (says Dr Bennet,) whence controversies arise, or whether they do not proceed from the scriptures, I answer, that the wars and fightings in theology spring from the same source with the wars in civil matters, (James iv. 1.) "*They come hence even from the lusts which war in our members.*" The truth, at least all necessary truth, is easily found, if men will carefully seek for it; but when they are resolved to pass that for truth, which they wish to find true, or when they are prejudiced on the wrong side, and obstinately persist in the maintenance of it, no wonder if they meet with opposition, and cause disputes. The scriptures, if men would hearken to them, would soon put an end to all our differences. Matters necessary to salva-

* The Popish Priests are constantly in the habit of inculcating on their people that we totally reject any appeal to the Fathers (as they are called,) of the primitive church. Thus, because Chillingworth has declared that the bible alone contains the religion of Protestants, a Priest exclaims: "Thus does the Protestant abandon to us the authority of the Fathers,—the good and wise of the best and wisest of ages honestly acknowledging that our (Romanist,) belief and maxims are the same which they professed." *Lingard's Sermons*, p. 24. 1810. The respect we pay to the Fathers is thus clearly expressed by Dr Sherlock: We think it a great confirmation of our faith, that the Fathers in the first and best ages, believed the same doctrines and expounded the scriptures in great and important points much to the same sense as we do; and therefore we refuse not to appeal to them; but yet we do not build our faith on their authority; we forsake them whenever they forsake the scriptures, or put perverse senses on them; and so does the Church of Rome too, when they contradict the present Roman faith. See the books referred to in page 188.

tion are plainly delivered in them ; and as for all other indifferent things or intricate points, the authority of the church is sufficient to guide us in them. If it be objected, that some persons are not convinced even of those things which the generality of christians think necessary to salvation, and therefore the scriptures must needs be obscure : I answer, that if such persons have not sincerely endeavoured to know the truth, the fault is their own ; but if they have sincerely endeavoured to be rightly informed, then I presume, they may receive such information, or else God will pity and pardon their ignorance. Prejudice and something else, may have darkened or blinded their minds : and then we cannot justly say, that the scriptures are obscure, because such persons do not understand them, any more than we can justly say, that the sun is a dark body, because some persons have either a blemish in their eyes, or utterly lost their sight.

THE END.

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